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THE MOONLIGHT SONATA

M. A. B. EVANS

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The Moonlight Sonata

and

Other Verses

By

M. A. B. Evans

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
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M. A. B. EVANS

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DEDICATION.

TO MY DAUGHTER.

(*Rondeau.*)

TO you I sing, O daughter mine,
To you, whose nature sweet and fine
Has blessed my life. With merry play
Of wit and fancy, day by day,
Your thoughts around my own entwine.

You 've helped me court the Muses nine;
And so, to you I should assign
All that herein is bright and gay,—
To you I sing.

In truth, your influence benign
Is felt by me, in ev'ry line.
"How have you helped me?" do you say?
By being just *yourself*, a ray
Of sunlight in my life to shine.
To you I sing.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
The Moonlight Sonata	1
The Pipes of Pan—Folk Songs	8
The Point of View; or, Music and Moonlight	26
Nocturne	39
The Swinging of the Pendulum	40
To-morrow	42
Palms	43
Toward Jericho	45
Mysteries	47
The Sun of Austerlitz	48
On the Statue of Brunelleschi, in the Piazza del Duomo, Florence	49
Giuseppe Verdi	50
Charles François Gounod	51
The Irish Brigade at the Battle of Fontenoy	52
The Poet's Demon	56
To Jupiter	57
Cleopatra	58
A Christmas Legend of Old Madrid	59

PAGE

Shadows 62

The Belfry Chimes 65

Darkness before Dawn 69

"Defend us from our Enemies" 73

The Skirts of Chance 75

Rudyard Kipling 79

Myths 80

Proteus 81

The Jeweled Portals of the Orient . . . 83

The Dawn of Hope 84

The Song of the Passing Years 85

The Storm 88

Marie Antoinette in the Conciergerie . . . 90

The Star of Bethlehem 92

In Springtime 94

The Drift of the Ages 96

Lotus Blossoms 98

Thanksgiving 100

Love's Messengers 101

The Rommany Rye 102

The Ideal 104

Joan, the Fair Maid of Kent 105

A Dream 106

Our Books 107

PAGE

Under Sir Walter's Umbrella 108

Vigor Immortalis 110

Arcady 111

Easter 112

Daffodils 113

Serenade 114

September Flowers 115

November 116

Look from Above 117

Pentecost 118

BALLADES, RONDEAUX, ETC.

Ballade of Rare Books 121

Another Ballade of Rare Books 123

Ballade of the Deep Sea 125

Ballade of Antique Furniture 127

'Neath Moon, or Star, or Chinese-Lantern Light . 129

Ballade of French Novels 131

Ballade of Forgotten Things 133

The Harlequin 135

Ballade of Fashions 137

The Price of Tamerlane 139

Ballade of the Eighteenth Century . . . 141

To Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough . . . 143

To a Sweet Wild Rose 144

PAGE

Over the Tea-Cups 145

To Virgil 146

The Graduating Class. To the World and the Fates, Greeting 147

Fancy 148

For Her 149

Sunshine 150

The Voice of Youth 151

The Veil of Time 152

Happy Days 153

Dance Music 154

At the Altar 155

The Truest Love 156

In Autumn 157

To the Portrait of an Ancient Dame, with a Book in her Hand 158

The Kettle Sings 159

With Hearts Adream 160

When Love Was Young 161

A Spring Symphony 162

The Gifts of Time 163

The Glad New Year 164

A Little Child 165

Night and Falling Snow 166

O'er Land and Sea 167

PAGE

March 168

Her Music 169

Spring Whispers 170

Although my Love Is far away 171

THE MOONLIGHT SONATA

THE MOONLIGHT SONATA.

(BEETHOVEN, Op. 27, No. 2.)

(*Adagio sostenuto.*)

MOONLIGHT o'er the earth is stealing,
Over hill and field and town,
Beauty magical revealing,
Soft as snowflakes drifting down.

*

All its misty glory throwing
O'er the sleeping, dreaming land,
Trees and hills and rivers showing
Touched as by a magic hand.

*

And as in a fairy glamour,
Bringing kindly spirits near,
Passes all the earth-born clamor,
Rage, and hate, and thoughts of fear.

*

Hovering pinions gently swaying
Waft a breath of purer air,
All ignoble thoughts allaying,
With the banishment of care.

****

Now the rays of moonlight gleaming
Sink within the human hearts,
Draw aside the veil of seeming,
Pierce the roof-trees, with their darts.

*

Cheer the souls by sorrow wasted;
Comfort those condemned to die.
Bitterness of death foretasted
Quell with thoughts upraised on high.
Greet the lonely watcher hoping
For the gleam of morning light;
Lead the student blindly groping
Through the mazes of the night.
Lift the burdened spirit waking
From a woeful dream of sin;
Calm the pulses wildly shaking,
Pour the balm of peace within.

*

O'er all striving, yearning mortals,
Hopes of Heaven to verify,
Open wide the glowing portals
Of the fragrant, starry sky.

*

Shine upon earth's faithful lovers,
For the truth of all romance
Round their wandering footsteps hovers.
Guide these steps from all mischance.

*

Ever in the moonlight glowing
Rings the old, old story true,
Promises of joy bestowing,
Giving life a meaning new.

*

For the heart of Nature sings it,
And within its life we move.
Every wandering moonbeam brings it,—
Moonlight breathes the breath of Love.

****
*****

INTERLUDE.

A change comes o'er the spirit of the dream,—
A subtle change,—things are not what they seem.
A witching spell invites to lighter sway,
And dreams fantastic dance upon their way.

(*Allegretto.*)

The fairies come; the fairies go;
Now dancing swift, now dancing slow.
They swing in the tree-tops, they hide in the bushes;
They whisper their secrets to sedges and rushes.

And in the moonlight they joy and revel,
With ne'er a thought or impulse of evil.
Their spells they are weaving,
Never deceiving;
They coax the bright beams
To carry good dreams,
And banish the Devil.

**

Now on the stream where the moonbeams quiver
They dance across the shimmering river.
They chase the shadows
Over the meadows;
They meet on the lawn,—
They cross, and are gone,—
They vanish forever.

**

(*Trio.*)

****

The measured passing of the hours
Chimes forth the knell of elfin powers.

And Time, that master-monarch slow,
Dispenser both of joy and woe,
Of life the everlasting foe,
Reminds us all, Time stays; we go.

****
****

(*Allegretto da capo.*)

(*Presto agitato.*)

Again a change,—the moon less bright,—
The stars obscured,—a misty light,—
A rushing wind,— the storm's refrain,—
Then whispers of the coming rain.

******

The thunder's roar,—a mighty crash,—
Swift followed by the lightning's flash!
The trees bend low their tossing boughs;
The storm swings on in mad carouse.

*****
*****

A bolt from out the darkened sky
Strikes down an oak with branches high.
The rain in torrents floods the land,
Uprooting, at the storm's command.

****

The listening earth a breathing space
Now hopes the storm has run its race.
And whispers of a lull, at last,
Give promises of danger past.

*****

But storming voices, full and strong,
Come rolling on the wind along,
And urging ever more and more
The elemental clash and roar.

****
****
****

Along its track the storm still wheels,
With lingering roll of thunder-peals;
As though upon its angry path
It knew not where to pause in wrath.

****

Fresh impetus,—a wilder swing,—
Like frightened birds upon the wing.
The scurrying clouds send forth again
Fresh torrents of fast falling rain.

******

The bending trees refuse to rise,
Or lift their branches to the skies.
The sodden earth is beaten down;
The shrubs are bent and overthrown.

****

The rain descends in rhythmic fall;
And still the storming voices call,
Inciting to a mystic fear,
As though a grewsome form drew near.

****
******

The form, with fever-laden breath,
The very harbinger of death,
Calls out to mortals to beware
The forces of the storm-tossed air.

*****
*****

Worn out at last, the storm is spent.
The clouds roll past,—the winds relent.
The voices take another form
In distant rumblings of the storm.

****
******

(*Adagio.*)

The moon, behind a veil of cloud,
Peeps out with added charms endowed,
And, as the stormy whirlwinds cease,
Behold! once more the light of peace!

*****

THE PIPES OF PAN.

FOLK SONGS.

WHEN first the rushes, stirred by passing breeze,
Began to whisper of the secrets rare
Confided to their keeping,—secrets strange,
Mysterious, breathing of the mighty force
And power of all the hidden world of life,
They swayed and trembled on their slender stems,
Well knowing that for calm repose and peace
They should be still; but yet they whispered on,
And more and more the whispers grew and swelled
Into a pæan of the joy, and love,
And hate, and struggle of the soul of life.

Then came the great god Pan, and took a reed
And made of it the flute to which he sang
His songs; which breezes wafted far and wide,
From land to land, o'er seas, and continents,
And oceans, wheresoever life should be.
The rocks, and hills, and streams, and ocean tides,
And birds, and fragrant flowers all took up
The song, each one its own appointed way,
To make impression on the soul of man.

So rang the pipes of Pan,—and all the reeds
And rushes gloried in their secret power,
And once again they whispered it was well
That they had told their secrets to the world.

Thus bending low, they intertwined, and made
A tiny nest, and tossed it to and fro,—
And added here and there an osier strand,
Until it grew into a cradle, fair
To look upon, and fragrant with the dews
Of heaven; wherein might rest the heart of man,
The coming race, the future of the world.

So to this budding hope the rushes sang
Those songs that every mother-heart well knows,
The songs of love, of comfort, and of trust,
Of sweet protection, and of sweeter rest,
The songs that breathe a hope of future fame
And glory for the child, in later years,
When fully grown, and masterful to cope
With all the knotty problems that arise
Throughout the troublous pilgrimage of life,—
Or songs that voice a wistful cry to Heaven
To guard, protect, and keep all ills away,—
While through each song the crooning lullaby
Of mother-love, so full and strong and true
That naught can quench it; though the world may frown,
And fortune prove more fickle than the wind,
Yet here is one safe resting-place for aye,
Wherein may shelter sure be ever found,—
A love so deep that though the whole wide world

Might praise, yet would the mother's voice
Be first and best to hear, of all that choir.

Again the pipes of Pan so loud and clear
Rang out in merry strains of mirth and joy,
Which bade the world lay off its heavy load
Of thought and work and worry for a while;
And rest, in pure contentment and the joy
Of living, and be amply satisfied
To breathe the fragrant air, to feel the breeze
Which stirs the leaves to whispers of content,
To listen to the carols of the birds,
To note the gorgeous colors of the fields,
The yellow corn, with scarlet poppies strewn,
The waving grass, the flowers rich and rare,
And many-hued, as if the rainbow tips
Had brushed each one with separate design
To give the stamp of heaven to earth's bright stars;
To drink deep of the sparkling springs of life,
The crystal drops, in whose pellucid prism
All bright and brilliant colors of the world
Are hidden close till scattered by the sun.

Anon the pipes rang to a sweeter tune,
A cadence softer, gentler than before,
Which breathed the voice of tender human love
In wooing notes,—the call from mate to mate
Which sounds throughout this mighty universe.
Across the seas and oceans will it ring,
To call together those on whom its spell
Is laid. Deep-rooted in the world's great heart,
Which quivers in its many thousand strings,

Are all the songs and symphonies of love.
The lilt of birds, the warbling of the brooks,
The droning humming of the hiving bees,
The calling of the lion to its mate,
The gentle cooing of the tender dove,
The rush of eagles' wings in that vast flight
Which bears them upward through the higher air
To rocks and crags, on which to build their nest.
The billows of the ocean sing the songs
Of love, as well as that mysterious power,
The strength of Fate, whereby the daring ones
Who make their homes upon the dashing waves
Behold the Mighty Wonders of the deep.
Within the forest depths the song is heard
By birds and beasts and creeping things alike
With all the vegetation of the woods,
Whose arching aisles and lofty spires shall point
Forever to the sky above us all.
So ring the songs of love within the heart
Of man, and so the world moves ever on,
Within its orbit, and throughout the time
Appointed for its own continuance.

Once more the pipes of Pan rang wildly forth
A song of war and battle in the land,
A song of triumph, and the martial sound
Of marching men, and many-footed force;
While over all the vision fair to see
Of Fame, with waving flags and mocking smiles,
And promises of glorious victories
To all the combatants, on either side.
To all alike she promises success,

With ne'er a breath or whisper of defeat.
And so they march, the poor deluded souls,
Forgetting that one side must surely win,
The other lose; while in their wrathful hearts
Each one is well determined that the fight
Shall go his way. Alas! A wailing dirge
The pipes of Pan must sound o'er some of them.
And these funereal strains are echoed far,
And sound forever in the universe.
The dirge of Death, wherever it may come,
In whatsoever guise the hand of Death
May fall upon this weary, waiting world,
There sound the strains of woe and sad lament.
For Death the sister is of joyous Life,
The sister twain, and both of equal birth,
Nor each without the other could exist.
Coincident they are; with Life comes Death;
With Death comes Life anew or different,
And 'twixt these two the struggle of the world.

So Pan the great, who voices all the thoughts
And deep emotions of the earthly heart,
First sang upon his pipes of rush and reed
Those songs which have come down the ages through,
Made vibrant by the common earthly need
To find expression for the joy and woe,
The love and hate, the struggle and the peace
That come to each existence in this world.

These songs though modified by time and place
And different conditions, are, at heart,
The same. In China or in India old,

In Egypt, or in ancient Palestine
Were lullabies that all the people sang,
And bridal-songs, and wailing dirge of death,
And cheerful harvest-home or vintage songs,
And pealing songs of battle and the chase;
With songs of those in sad captivity
When, seated by the waters' brink, they wept
And could not sing the songs of Israel
In strangers' lands, but mingled bitter tears
With sad and wailing songs of homesickness.
Some trace of these still lingers on the Nile
In mournful cadences along the shore.
Though oftener the pomp and pageantry
Of ancient Egypt sound among their songs,
The clash of arms, the high and martial strains
Of war and battle; or the joy of chase,
The mighty hunters' glory, pride, and power;
Or yet again the awful majesty
Of sacerdotal right and privilege,
The priestly claims so craftily put forth
To vex the souls of kings and conquerors.
While here and there a strain of purest love
Lights up the darker background of the past,
And through the ages touches still the hearts
Of those who listen, and who know themselves
Akin to all the past, in thought and will.

In old Chaldæa, where the shepherds watched
Their flocks by night, all seated on the ground,
Perhaps the strange celestial melodies
Which fell upon their eager waiting ears
Were echoed ever after in their songs,

A something strange, unusual, and sweet,
Which haunts the dreamy music of the East,
The whispers of an almost heavenly tongue,
An inspiration from the skies above,
When first the morning stars together sang.

In ancient Greece so mystical, and filled
With highest knowledge of the great god Pan
And all the elder deities of yore,
The grace of life showed in its people's songs.
Though blent with strength, and force of will and way,
Yet grace was foremost in all thoughts of life,—
Grace in their songs and in their dancing, too,
(For dance is mother of all music's forms,)
Grace in their old traditions, fitly blent
With music either of the voice or lute,—
With all they sang, or said, or did, was grace.
In Sicily the echoes of the past
Remain, and all their superstitions, too.
Beneath the soft and gentle words of speech
Or song, the fiery hand is always felt,
Quick to resent a trifling, fancied wrong,
Slow to forgive, unwilling to obey,
Their turbulent and turgid souls find voice
In songs most passionate and fanciful,
In which the Sirens' call is often heard,
And often, too, the stories of the sea,
As well as all the varied themes of love,
And war, and death, and Fate 'mid all the rest.
Fate! The one force beyond the power or ken
Of gods or mortals, to whose mighty will
All, all must bow,—who, with an even hand
Bestows, or good or bad, the lots of men.

No altars needed Fate, for everywhere
And over everything her power was felt,
From which was no escape, or hope of change.
The Eastern mind imbued with fateful lore
Accepts its destiny, and even sings
In praise of this, the one great shadow cast
Adown the sunlight of Hellenic life.
With all its freedom Fate was always there,
A law immutable that none might change.
And, though we give it other names and forms,
Is Fate, in all its force, not with us still?

The Romans thought to alter by their prayers
The whims and storms of Fate, but even they
Whose armies rode triumphant over all
The world then known, and captured mighty kings,
And made all lands pay tribute as their due,
They too were powerless to change the laws
By which Fate ruled the whole wide universe.
The songs to Fate are many, powerful,
And pleading,—with the southern grace of thought.

I

"Once in the gloaming, Fortune met me here;
Fair did she seem, and Love was on me laid,
Her hair was raised, as were it half a sphere,
Flowered on her breast a rose that can not fade.
Then said I: 'Fortune, thou without a peer,
What rule shall tell the measure of thine aid?'
'The pathway of the moon through all the year,
The channel of the exhaustless sea,' she said.

II

"One night, the while I slept, drew Fortune near,
At once I loved, such beauty she displayed;
A crescent moon did o'er her brows appear,
And in her hand a wheel that never stayed.
Then said I to her: 'O my mistress dear,
Grant all my wishes, mine if thou wilt aid.'
But she turned from me with dark sullen cheer
And 'Never!' as she turned, was all she said.

III

"I saw my Fortune 'midst the sounding sea
Sit weeping on a rocky height and steep,
Said I to her: 'Fortune, how is 't with thee?'
'I cannot help thee, child' (so answered she.)
'I cannot help thee more—so must I weep.'
How sweet were those her tears, how sweet, ah me!
Even the fishes wept within the deep.

IV

"One day did Fortune call me to her side,
'What are the things,' she asked, 'that thou hast done?'
Then answered I: 'Dear mistress, I have tried
To grave them upon marble, every one.'
'Ah! maddest of the mad!' so she replied,
'Better hadst writ on sand than wrought in stone;
He who to marble should his love confide,
Loves when he loves till all his wits are gone.'

V

"There where I lay asleep, came Fortune in,
She came the while I slept and bade me wake,
'What dost thou now?' she said, 'companion mine?
What dost thou now? Wilt thou then love forsake?
Arise,' she said, 'and take this violin,
And play till every stone thereat shall wake.'
I was asleep when Fortune came to me,
And bade me rise, and led me unto *thee!*"

When Roman armies, in their conquering course,
Marched on and on across subservient lands,
Their songs went with them, and were quickly blent
With songs of conquered countries, as their names
Were handed down as well, which to this day
Remain a monument of Rome's great power.

Soon modified in light and merry Gaul
The Roman songs assumed a softer tone.
Anon a breath of chivalry was blown
Into the songs of France; for feudal sway,
The strongest force of mediæval times,
Gave lord and vassal each appointed place,
And gave to woman place and rank which ne'er
She held before, and made her "lady fair,"
The arbiter in all their tournaments,
From whom a wreath, a rose, a silken scarf
Became a vaunted prize to battle for.
Her fair white hands bestowed the victor's crown;
Her praise was on the tongues of all mankind.
So grew the songs of feudal minstrelsy,

In praise of all the virtues of the queens
Of love and battle, in the knightly lists.
Though *all* the virtues thus attributed
Might not have been quite true, yet well they served
To furnish themes for merry minstrels' lays,
Or lover's songs, to move his lady's heart.
Right soon the troubadours and the trouvères
Found footing in the whole wide realm of France.
A welcome guest at every fireside glow,
The entertainer at each banquet-feast,
Dispenser of the news from town to town,
The friend of lord and lady, serf and maid,
Abbot and priest, and holy nuns alike,
The minstrel was the freest soul of all.
Not called upon to battle, like the rest,
But only just to sing the valiant deeds
Of heroes, or, in rolling martial strains,
To chant before the armies songs of war,
By which their courage should be strengthened well,
Their arms made stronger for the coming fray,
The minstrel happily could lead his life,
And leave the echoes of his sweetest songs
The heritage of other, later years.

In Germany the minstrel, too, found place.
The Minnesingers' songs were gladly heard
In farm and castle, field and camp alike,
Where'er these wanderers might find their way.
An added touch of legendary lore
Came with the Lurlei myths adown the Rhine,
And struck a strongly sentimental note,
That thrilled and pulsed in every German heart.

The Lurlei, beautiful as poet's dream,
And dangerous as well,—a woman fair,
To sing and dream about, and hold above,
As model for prosaic womankind;
There still she sits and sings in German song,
All sentimental thoughts around her thrown.
But often sounds the military note,
The sword-song of the nation's strength and power,
By which the war-lords test their own desires.
A military nation frankly boasts
Of military songs and battle-hymns,
By which the Prince of Peace is oft invoked
To countenance the bloody deeds of war.
Still other songs are heard, as students sing
Old relics of the former pagan days,
In praise of Bacchus, god of mirth and wine,
Attractive always to uproarious youth,
A never-ending source of noisy glee,
And blows, and duels of the student kind,
Of which a foolish pride oft brings in train
Perchance a later sorrow, shame, or woe.
But proudly, merrily these songs will ring
As long as German students love to sing.
And here and there one hears the echoes still
Of those great songs the old Crusaders sang,
When all the world was seized with fiery zeal
To rescue from the hands of infidels
The holy tomb. Nor wife, nor child, nor home
Weighed in the balance, when the summons came.
With portents, signs, and wonders came the call,
Which like a fever spread from land to land.
E'en little children felt its power, and tried

With tiny feet to march upon the way
Which led the world to save Jerusalem.
A wondrous frenzy! Marvelous to all!
Incredible to read or think about!
Most fitly do its songs the glamour bring
Of all its pompous power and majesty,
When kings and princes doffed their lordly state,
And underwent the hardships great and small
Which soon befell their own retainers all.

E'en Hungary and Poland heard the call,
Bohemia, and the farthest Tartar edge
Of Russia, held in darkest bondage close;
This last a world within itself to-day,
A mixture of the dark and bitter side
Of life, with rich barbaric splendor crowned,
And not yet come to full maturity.
Strong with a cruel strength and masterful,
Its music sounding of the knout and cord,
Yet intermingled with the fierce wild cries
Of love and hate, from firm barbaric souls
Who well know how to suffer and be still.
Fair Poland, though defeated, and no more
The home of free and independent men,
Retains the memories of glories lost,
And, in her music, still the stately tread
Through noble castles and ancestral halls
Rings out again, contrasted with despair
And gloom, or gusts of fitful gayety.

In Hungary, the wild, free, roving life
The Gypsies lead has taken firmest hold

Upon that nation's music. Camp-fires glow,
The Gypsy kettles boil and bubble o'er,
With strange mysterious fortunes in their smoke,
While chants the wind, the tree-tops all among,
A song of wild entrancing freedom's spell,
A freedom from the worries of the world,
The shackles of convention thrown aside,
The liberty of fields and grassy knolls,
Of hills and streams, and forests dark and wild,
And all a merry playground, for the nonce,
With naught to hinder fullest joy of life.
Ah! close to nature's heart the Gypsy lives,
And weary souls throughout this burdened world
Right gladly list and hear the Rommany rye.

Far north, in regions of the ice and snow,
The Norseland legends flourished, and were told
By Scandinavian poets, set to strains
Of music wild and weird, as when the wind
Comes rushing down a dark and deep defile,
On which the Valkyries could fitly ride,
When erstwhile came the call of wind and wold.
In rolling thunder-peals the voice of Thor
Could shake the world, while with his hammer strong
He quickly vanquished all his enemies.
And, like the screaming of the mighty wind,
The Scandinavian skalds played battle-hymns,
As marching out to war they led the way
To victory,—or death Walhalla-crowned.

These brave, adventurous Vikings pushing forth
To other lands, saw England on their course,

And beached their vessels' keels upon her shore,
And made their home therein, and left their mark
Upon the country, which to-day remains.
Its force, and strength, and breeziness of thought
Come from the ancient Vikings bold and free.
Still other nations left their traces, too,
And all in England's music fitly sound.
Both strong, and tender, merry, soft, and mild,
Or rolling like the beating of the drums,
Or like the waves that break upon the shore;
Of many varied kinds, and strongly marked,
The English music is, with much folk-lore
And songs commingled; with the pixies' spell
In summer, and in winter yule-tide songs,
Recalling oft a lost Druidic rite
Engrafted on a later, purer faith.

The Welsh and Irish folk-songs have a depth
And wealth of strong imagination, strung
With pearls of fancy, whimsical and rare,
A touch capricious, difficult to catch,
And fleeting as the fire-flies o'er the fens.
A fitting home for fairies and their kin,
These fields, and lakes, and bogs, and castles old.
And oh! the magic of that potent stone!
The songs and legends of its fateful spell!
All Ireland must have kissed it, and belike
Its magic even reaches o'er the sea.

None doubts the bonny music of the Scotch,
And none mistakes it, for it bears the stamp
Of strong and rugged character and force.

And, like the ancient Greeks, a studied theme
Runs ever through it; mingled with the skirl
And swing and drone of bag-pipes deftly blown,
The music has a fashion all its own.
Of bogies, ghosts, and goblins legends run,
And witches dancing to the skirling pipes
Blown by the Prince of Darkness, called the De'il.
Ill luck to late nocturnal revelers
Who chance to stumble on such eerie sights!
Far better were they safely in their hames,
Though scolded well by sulky, sullen dames.

And what of that fair land across the sea,
The newest born of nations, and the home
Of all oppressed and struggling souls whate'er?
America, shalt thou not join in songs
That upward float,—thou, who hast much to give?
The rolling of Niagara, with all
Its legends speaks for thee; the forests dense,
The lakes and rivers, and the mountains bold,
The thousand miles of yellow, waving corn,
The sunny fields of cotton and of rice,
Whence come the songs of old plantation life
That still ring on, though old conditions changed;
These songs the truest type of humble race,
And sweet with the intensity of faith
And loving service in a common cause.
For liberty the change was justly made;
Yet shall we ever keep these negro songs,
Which bear the stamp of pathos, written deep,
In all their soft and tender melodies.

This is a nation cosmopolitan,
Wherein are blended wondrously both good
And bad, that passed within our open gates.
And we are young, with all the virile power
Of youth, which on the rolling prairie plains
Finds best expression. Thence may come the songs
That best portray our country's heart and soul.
Compounded of the folk-songs brought across
The ocean by the early settlers here,
And Indian songs and legends which abound,
Attuned to rushing waters' mighty flow,
With all the free untrammeled western life,
The lofty peaks, with caps of whitest snow,
The wondrous mines Aladdin's wealth can bring,
The mighty forests and the rolling plains,
With all the imagery of sea and sky,
A newer school of music should arise,
Of lofty force and wondrous witchery,
Which once again shall show the power of youth,
And with its beauty startle all the world.

So Youth once more speaks out, and Pan takes up
His reed, and sings the goodly songs of youth,
When hope is bright, and all the world in smiles,
And every thing is possible to do,
Within the brilliant future far ahead.
Just so the morning stars together sang,
When first they looked upon creation's face.

And so, to find the deep emotions' tone,
The origin of folk-songs new and old,

One must go back to the beginnings first
Of life, for all such songs begin and end
Within a cradle. This is the refrain,—
And this the message daily, hourly brought,
Which sounds for aye, upon the pipes of Pan.

THE POINT OF VIEW,

OR

MUSIC AND MOONLIGHT.

(*"Tout dépend du point de vue."*)

SCENE: The deck of a Cunard steamer. At one end a group of young people singing to the accompaniment of guitars and mandolins. In the bright moonlight walk slowly back and forth two people, Sir Misanthrope and Madame Beaumonde.

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

This charming night! These lovely stars!
The music of those sweet guitars!
Ah me! how can a world go wrong
So filled with music, moonlight, song,
And all the sweet amenities?

SIR MISANTHROPE.

Oh, none can say, but—so it is.

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

Yet surely even you admit
There are things which a cynic's wit

May find above it,—voices rare
Which float upon the ambient air,
Or melodies, like warbling birds,
That need no medium of words
To bring a sweet and wondrous peace,
From all the cares of life release,
And lifting one far, far above.

SIR MISANTHROPE.

Now, don't, I pray you, mention love.
That is the last thing one should say
Discussing fairly music's sway.
Just look at great musicians' lives,
Their petty quarrels. Why the hives
Of stinging, buzzing, homing bees
Are fitter far as similes.
This man has used a critic's knife.
That one eloped with *this* man's wife.
His friends have driven *this* one mad;
And *that* one wishes that they had.
And ev'ry man, within his soul,
Would like to set aside the whole
Except himself. Don't prate of art,
The great uplifting of the heart,
With finer feelings now and then;
Just mark the *lives* of all these men.

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

I 'm glad you say "these *men*," because
You 're just within politeness' laws.

SIR MISANTHROPE.

Ahem! Of *women's* quarrels naught
Should e'er be said, for never ought
The world to think *them* less than good.

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

You do not say just what you would.

SIR MISANTHROPE.

You would not like to hear perhaps.
Politeness would be setting traps
To catch my words.

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

I see your need
To speak your mind, so pray proceed.

SIR MISANTHROPE.

You sing, Madame?

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

A little, yes.

SIR MISANTHROPE.

And also play? I rightly guess?
Of these accomplishments desired
Which one is by the world admired?

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

[*Aside.*]

I see what you would say. To find
The world of quite another mind
From what one has one's self, you think
Would be a bitter cup to drink.

[*Aloud very sweetly.*]

Well, as to that I do not know,
For tastes are apt to differ so.
Some like my playing, some my songs,
To each I give what best belongs
Within his province. There 's no doubt
That songs are heard far more about.
More people like to hear one sing
Than play, perhaps, the self-same thing.
For all the world can understand
The words, if not the tones, so grand
Or sweet. Yet melody sublime,
Beyond the touch of verse or rhyme,
In instrumental work is heard
Ofttimes. To choose would be absurd.
On one account a voice should give
The greater pleasure, since to live
Beyond a certain span of years
It cannot hope. And filled with fears
Is ev'ry sudden breath of air.
Fatigue, or sorrow, carking care,
Or too much joy, may haply bring
The inability to sing.
So, while it lasts, its power we find
The highest given to mankind.

But, when long years shall onward roll,
The hands, if kept in good control,
Can always exercise their skill,
Evoking sweetest chords at will.
Far past the threescore years and ten
Allotted to the sons of men,
May instrumental music be,
The threshold to eternity.

SIR MISANTHROPE.

You wax poetical, I vow.
If Lady X. could hear you now,
How well she would be pleased to learn
The deep enthusiasms that burn
Within your heart. And, by the way,
How charmingly she sang to-day.
Her voice is of the sweetest kind,
So rich and mellow, yet refined.
And Mrs. Y. did wondrous well;
Her voice is clear as any bell.
While as for that young girl who played,
The one so sweet, demure, and staid,
I thoroughly regretted when
She stopped. I was entranced, but then——
Perhaps this is not strictly true,
For I left her, to walk with you.

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

A thousand thanks! [*Aside.*] You sly old fox!
You think you have me in a box.

[*Aloud*]. Yes, dearly do I love to hear
The voice of Lady X. Her ear
Is very true. And Mrs. Y.
Evokes a smile, a tear, a sigh,
With equal ease. I cannot see
How any one can fail to be
Distinctly pleased with just the style
That young pianist has.

SIR MISANTHROPE.

You smile.
Perhaps you think with just a shade
Too much of energy she played.

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

Oh, no. Her notes rang clear and clean.

SIR MISANTHROPE.

You smiled at something else, you mean.
Perhaps at Lady X.'s notes,—
She "shaves" them, and their "value" quotes,
We all well know; and if I gave
Applause to Mrs. Y., I crave
To modify my words; for Fate
Has made me so compassionate
That when I see a woman's face
Drawn up in such a queer grimace,
Perhaps my sympathy I waste,
But,——

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

Never show a lack of taste.
Pray do not spoil your first design;
You praised all three. Your taste is mine.

SIR MISANTHROPE.

You see I have not heard *you* sing.

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

Oh, that is quite another thing!

SIR MISANTHROPE.

Or touch the soft piano keys.
No doubt you play with greatest ease.
You smile again.

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

Ah, well! for that
I 'll tell you what I 'm smiling at.
I 've read among the merry rhymes
Of Austin Dobson, which at times
Divert me, this, so smartly scrawled,
"Ballade of Imitation" called.
"If they hint, O Musician, the piece that you played
Is naught but a copy of Chopin or Spohr,
That the ballad you sing is but merely 'conveyed'
From the stock of the Arnes and the Purcells of yore;

That there 's nothing, in short, in the words or the score,
That is not as outworn as the 'Wandering Jew';
Make answer—Beethoven could scarcely do more—
That the man who plants cabbages imitates, too!"

No need to give you ev'ry verse,
But hear the moral sharp and terse.

"Postscriptum.—And you, whom we all so adore,
Dear Critics, whose verdicts are always so new!—
One word in your ear. There were Critics before—
And the man who plants cabbages imitates, too!"

[*Silence, during which the young people at the other end of the boat are heard singing "On the Road to Mandalay."*]

Sir Misanthrope.

That 's really quite a pretty air.

Madame Beaumonde.

The words would *please* your friend Voltaire,
Your model in philosophy!

Sir Misanthrope.

[*Eagerly.*]

You like Voltaire, I plainly see.

Madame Beaumonde.

Oh, yes,—in the original;
In imitation, not at all.

[*A pause.*]

SIR MISANTHROPE.

But then you *like* Voltaire. 'T is strange
To find a woman with such range
Of thought, with such extended view,
And quite unprejudiced, like you!
Perhaps you also like the scheme,
So fruitful as a pleasing theme
For long discourses, that, in short,
Which goes to show that ev'ry sort
Of thing, in earth, or sky, or sea,
Must be of some utility.
E'en grace and beauty count for naught
Unless by them some deed is wrought
Which helps along the mighty plan
Of lifting up the life of man.

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

Much can be said, but then, indeed,
This is not new, this modern creed.

SIR MISANTHROPE.

Oh, no. But in that case, I ween,
Another light shines on this scene.
Of what use is that dull, white moon?
What use that merry, laughing tune?
In fact, I 'm loath to ask, Madame,
I 'm not good at an epigram,
But—what use is your beauty rare,
Though undisputed, clear, and fair?

MADAME BEAUMONDE

[*Laughing.*]

Your wit has still a lightsome touch,
In that you e'en admit *so* much.
My dear Sir Misanthrope, in truth,
Since you and I have passed our youth,—

SIR MISANTHROPE.

Nay, that, Madame, I did not say
Of you. In fact, another way
I meant my words,—for,—I protest,—

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

Oh, spare me still another jest!

SIR MISANTHROPE.

I did not mean just what I said;
At least, not as your fancy led
Your wit to take it.

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

Oh, I know.
You 're like the satires of Boileau.
You mean not all you say. Alas!
The thought is wholesome,—let it pass!

SIR MISANTHROPE.

But, dear Madame,—

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

Dear Sir, I ask
A moment only for the task
Of explanation. Hear the ring
Of those young voices, as they sing.
Note well the glow and warmth and fire
Which mellow moonlight can inspire.
And as the sweet sounds rise and fall,
A magic charm is cast o'er all.
The music, in itself a power,
Uplifts the world, and gilds this hour.
And though to-morrow should be dark
And cold and dreary, yet the mark
Of ev'ry happy hour shall last,
Till time, and joy, and hope are past.

SIR MISANTHROPE.

[*A pause.*]

You speak, Madame, but of the young.
Is no one to be classed among
The lucky mortals who enjoy
This magic spell, without alloy,
Save only youths and laughing maids?
This turn the question half evades.
Now, I am sure, if you would try
To just continue, even I——

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

[*Rousing suddenly from a passing reverie.*

Oh that, indeed, depends upon
A person's nature. Ev'ry one

Is not of equal age, you see,
With equal years.

SIR MISANTHROPE.

[*Eagerly.*]

With you and me
You think perhaps that time has stopped,
Or, over years a curtain dropped?
You think that youth can come again,
Obedient to a soft refrain?

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

[*Icily.*]

My youth, I 'm sure, it 's vain to seek.
Of you, of course, I can not speak.

SIR MISANTHROPE.

Ah, no! Of course no magic power
Could gild for *us* a passing hour.
We've talked just as we would have talked
If through prosaic streets we walked.
If play of fancy, wit, our fun,
Has through our conversation run,
It does not count.

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

[*Laughing.*]

Sir Misanthrope,
Excuse me, but I really hope
You did not mean a compliment.

SIR MISANTHROPE.

You would not take one, if 't was sent.

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

Don't try it. We should come to strife. [*Humming.*]
"There 's nothing half so sweet in life
As Love 's young dream." The music's swell
Suggests a thought of doubt, as well.
Pity that one should e'er grow old,
Or lovers marry, or grow cold.
Yet there are compensations vast
When all such follies are well past,
When music's power, as you suggest,
Is nothing but a passing jest,—
When common-sense with moonlight blends.
But then, you see, so much depends,——

SIR MISANTHROPE.

Ah, yes, I think I follow you.
Depends upon——

MADAME BEAUMONDE.

The point of view.

NOCTURNE.

[Chopin, No. 2.]

THE night-winds are sighing, the rivers run slowly,
The birds all are sleeping away in their nests.
The peace of primeval creation most holy
Broods over the world, and on everything rests.

But the spirit of man, with unsatisfied longing,
Still yearns evermore towards the greater Beyond;
And sleep, without waking, his soul would be wrong-
ing,—
His thoughts, soaring high, feel no fetter or bond.

In dreams come the hopes of ambition, or glory,
Of love, or of faith, or of joy unfulfilled,
All woven together,— a magical story,
Through æons of time, with immensity thrilled.

And faces of loved ones, in shadowy billows
Of cloud, shot with sunlight from yesterdays'
beams,—
All these do the night-winds waft over our pillows,
And quiet our hearts, with their far-reaching
dreams,
Dreams,—dreams,—dreams.

THE SWINGING OF THE PENDULUM.

ONE day we live as in a cloud, apart,
With people of another world we talk,
The world of books and pictures, music, art
In all its forms,—with these we hourly walk.

They fill our lives and take up all our thought.
They lift us far above the petty cares,
The little, vexing worries, daily brought
To try our strength, and catch us unawares.

Next day intensely practical are we.
We do with all our might whate'er our hands
May find to work upon. An ecstasy
Of toil compels response to its demands.

This, too, hath compensations, for, engrossed,
We think not of the passing hours' soft chime;
While deeds for self, by those for others crossed,
Make shining patterns in the woof of time.

So, like a swinging pendulum, between
The two extremes, our life is passed away;
Forever striving for the golden mean,
Yet never living quite a perfect day.

And, as the equipoise is ne'er attained,
  Save when the pendulum has ceased to move,
By death, perchance, our equal balance gained,
  So we may hope for perfect days above.

TO-MORROW.

WITH humble, contrite voice, my little child
Deplored her faults, as by her bed we stood;—
Confessed she had been naughty and self-willed
To-day, but promised to be good,—so good,
To-morrow.

Dear child! we children of a larger growth,
Like you, leave half our better deeds undone.
Like you, we tread the wrong path, nothing loath.
Our goodness, too, awaits the coming sun,
To-morrow.

But on us all the Father still looks down
With tender love. He hears His children's cry,
He weighs our struggles, by the world unknown,
And gives us still the chance of by and by,
To-morrow.

And when the advent of another day
No longer may our eager eyes await,
He bids us trust His love to wipe away
Our faults, and enter, like a child, the great
To-morrow.

PALMS.

ADOWN the pathway strewn with palms He rode,
His thoughts intent, His bearing firm and high.
"Hosanna!" cried the multitude, who showed
Their love for Him, with each exultant cry.

"Hosanna!" still they shouted, and again
"Hosanna! Blessed is our King and Lord!
Hail to the Son of David, King of men!
Hosanna from all hearts with one accord!"

He heard them not. His thoughts were fixed above.
The secrets of the universe unrolled
Before His mind; while deep, abiding love
Accepted all His destiny foretold.

For He had preached the words He came to say;
Had taught such doctrines man had never heard.
And through all ages these should find their way,—
The world should be uplifted through His Word.

His final triumph, e'en through death's disgrace,
He saw, and realized its potent good,
And just for once this shone upon His face.
For once the shouting people understood.

Oh, happy thus to know the Saviour held
His true position one brief moment's span.
Not scorned and crucified, but praised, upheld;
The only perfectly successful Man.

TOWARD JERICHO.

WHEN going down to Jericho,
That place of sin, and crime, and woe,
This story happened long ago.
In journeying to Jericho
A certain man among thieves fell,
Who stripped him, wounding him as well,
And leaving him half dead, to tell
Their fate who go to Jericho.

A Priest and Levite both passed by,
Sent out, perchance, to vainly try
To do some good, in fashion high,
Upon the road to Jericho.
But praises of Jerusalem
A wounded sinner would condemn.
This fallen soul was not for them,
Nor journeys down to Jericho.

Their words he would not understand,
Their solemn priestly reprimand.
He needed but a helping hand
Upon the road to Jericho.
So both passed by on the other side.
But soon, a man who dared not chide
Came by, then stopped to save and guide
This traveler to Jericho.

He helped him up; he cheered him on;
He bound his bruises one by one;
And ere the daylight quite was gone
Their backs were turned to Jericho.
And still the good Samaritan,
With friendly words, as man to man,
And deeds which mercy far outran,
Stayed him who'd go to Jericho.

Oh, more than ritualistic power,
To guard and help in danger's hour,
When clouds of sin and trouble lower
Upon the road to Jericho,
Is th' good Samaritan's command.
And may we all well understand
The value of this friendly hand,
Should *we* go down to Jericho.

MYSTERIES.

THE breath of summer weighs upon our brain,—
Strong heat, the source and fountain of all life,
The fructifying breath of all the world,
The pulse of Nature; when it touches us
In its full force, the secret is too much.
It weighs us down.

And, if we cannot bear this one slight glimpse
Into the heart of life, poor fools are we
To try to solve the greater mysteries,
The secrets of the universe, revealed
To none in their entirety, for they bring
Both *life* and *death*.

THE SUN OF AUSTERLITZ.

DEEP banks of clouds obscure the eastern sky;
The mists of night are slow to roll away.
The earth still sleeps, but dreams of victory,—
And watchful eyes await the orb of day.

Napoleon, beset by many foes,
Yet confident in mind, all fear dispels
Among his troops, where'er his face he shows.
His "star" leads on, and victory foretells.

But see! A rosy light! The dawn appears!
And glowing fingers tear apart the clouds.
Away with dread! Away with dismal fears!
No darkness e'er the hero's mind enshrouds.

The sun streams up, his banners all unfurled.
Full-armed, the victor on his war-horse sits.
Hail, king of day! Hail, master of the world!
The sun! The glowing Sun of Austerlitz!

ON THE STATUE OF BRUNELLESCHI, IN THE PIAZZA DEL DUOMO, FLORENCE.

O BRUNELLESCHI, blest o'er all the world
Art thou! Forever thus, with dreaming eyes,
To gaze upon thy lofty, finished work,
Which towers ever upward toward the skies!—
The dome of that Cathedral, vast and wide,
Well-nigh impossible to raise, and yet,
Thy genius wrought the seeming miracle,
And none will e'er thy mighty plan forget.
For there it stands to-day, as thou canst see,
The pride of Florence, and thy work alone!
Not often thus to mortals is it given,—
Our dreams are shifting; thine are carved in stone.

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

SO doth the Muse to those who love her best,—
Eternal youth of heart, a priceless gain,
She freely gives. No more a fruitless quest,
The Fount of Youth is sought for, all in vain.

Verdi, an evergreen, which, toward the sky,
Fearless of storms, would pierce the very clouds;
So rose this genius, high, and yet more high,
While round him flocked the world, in lauding crowds.

Each wandering breeze of heaven his music found,
And wafted it in cadences along.
Hail to the Prince of Music! King of Sound!
Hail Verdi, who has filled the world with song!

CHARLES FRANÇOIS GOUNOD.

FULL of Nature's fiery meaning,
Filled with power and grace,
Thus Gounod pressed ever onward,
Foremost in the race.

Not for him were old traditions,—
Shorn of all their glow!
Life and force must be within them,
Else he bade them go.

Yet the great and strong essentials
Ne'er did he disdain.
Weaving thus, 'twixt old and modern,
Beauty's strongest chain.

Still his music's glow enthralls us,
Like a sparkling gem.
And the birds, his first instructors,
Sing his requiem.

THE IRISH BRIGADE AT THE BATTLE OF FONTENOY.

THE TALE OF A GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER.

WOULD you hear then, my children, the story
Of th' world-renowned Irish Brigade?
On many fields won we our glory;
Since Fontenoy ne'er shall it fade.

Ah, then was the time we were skittish!
And all of the Generals say,
Fighting Austrians, Dutchmen, and British,
The Irish Brigade saved the day.

You see it was this way. With Frenchmen
We Irish were fighting for France;
For we were King Jamie's own henchmen,
Right glad to lead England a dance.

The French monarch Louis was with us,
And never a foot would he stir,
Though it looked as if Billy would pith us!
(Duke o' Cumberland,—pardon the slur.)

Marshal Saxe sent King Louis full warning.
One thing for the Bourbons say I:
While their methods of life I 'd be scorning,
They very well know how to die.

Like a long ugly serpent, slow moving,
Our enemies' column advanced.
While our shots seemed to almost need proving,
So harmless and useless they glanced.

Yet our cross-fire was after all telling,
And had not their discipline been
Of the strictest, the ranks we were felling
Had shown themselves battered and thin.

But on and yet on came the column.
Unbroken before us they stood,—
While their cannon-shots, regular, solemn,
Ploughed furrows 'mong strong men and good.

Adieu to brave Monsieur de Guerchi!
Farewell to the son of the Prince![1]
Och! ye murdering rascals, I curse ye
Whenever I think of ye since!

For our own Colonel Dillon ye slaughtered!
I saw him myself when he fell,
And for vengeance our mouths fairly watered,
While out went a wild Irish yell.

And how it all happened I know not.
But just when the day seemed quite lost,
We doubled about like a bow-knot,—
Ne'er thinking or recking the cost.

And brave Marshal Saxe coming to us,
Himself at the head of our men,

[1] Prince de Craon, Governor of Tuscany.

Led the way, with these words which thrilled through
us:
"Now charge, for your life, once again!"

And the right, and the left, and the centre
All charged, in a furious way,
As together we followed our Mentor.
Oh, never saw I such a fray!

Like tigers we threw ourselves on them,
Our forces united at last,—
And their colors! we speedily won them!
Th' invincible column was passed!

Slowly, slowly, our foemen retreated.
Aha! 'T was a glorious sight!
Then they rallied once more, but defeated,
They finally gave up the fight!

Then you should have heard our wild clamor,
The shoutings and cries rent the air!
Not a silent throat, under war's glamour,
But cried "Vive le Roi!" ev'rywhere.

And the dry eyes that looked from the wounded
Were wet with the joy of the hour,
While King Louis himself was dumfounded,
And weakly remembered his power.

Marshal Saxe at the first, in conclusion,
Had flung himself down by the King:
"I have lived long enough, Sire, confusion
To all of your foes thus to bring."

Ah, Maurice! we 'll never forget you!
  And though all that day you were ill,
Yet you ne'er let your own ailments fret you,
  But fought, with a steadier will!

Then hurrah for the grand, mighty Marshal
  Who guided the struggle we made!
And then, to be wholly impartial,—
  Hurrah for the Irish Brigade!

THE POET'S DEMON.

WHENEVER I sit down to write,
Perched on my table, near the light,
There stands a little Demon bold,
With wrinkled brow, bent form, and old,
Who chills my fancies at his sight.

I fain would sing of "Dawn," or "Love,"
A flower's fragrance, or the glove
My lady wore last night, when she
And I were dancing merrily.
The Demon frowns, my lines above.

I plan a lovely paragraph,
In which "fair knights and ladies quaff
The nectar of the gods,"—but pause,
For in the middle of my clause
I hear the Demon's mocking laugh.

On "Summer Winds" I fain would soar,
"Spring," "Autumn," "Winter," I 'd implore,
But mimicking my "Songs of Birds,"
The Demon whistles forth these words:
"That 's all been said long, long before!"

TO JUPITER.

(A Version from the Classics.)

HANG out thy scales, O Jupiter,
And in the balance place,
On one side, woman, fair of form
And beautiful of face,
The other side, the fragrant weed.
Then weigh them well, to see
Which one the greater comforter
Through griefs and woes can be.

A woman's smile, a breath of smoke,
A soft and gentle hand,
A nameless soothing influence,
Where thoughts and hopes expand,—
But, if thou give the preference
To woman, then indeed,
The next time Juno ruffles thee,
O Jupiter,—try the weed!

CLEOPATRA.

O QUEEN, we bow before thy spell!
Thy wondrous charm
Undimmed the centuries have kept,
Secure from harm.

Thou hast all things that women crave,
Love, beauty, health,
Wisdom, nobility, and power,
Unending wealth.

Yet these are only lotus-leaves
Which but enfold
That blossom's heart, whose sweetness rare
Can not be told.

Thou hast the secrets of the Sphinx,
Art old as Time,
Yet youthful ever, and admired
Through ev'ry clime.

Thou art a mystery as deep
As joy and woe.
We *feel* thy spell, but what it *is*
We may not know.

A CHRISTMAS LEGEND OF OLD MADRID.

"HE shall die on Christmas morning,"
Quoth the King, and turned away.
"Punishment shall surely follow,
As the night succeeds the day."

With a cry, a Spanish dancer
Knelt before him, and implored:
"And, if night should never follow,
Might the man go free, my lord?"

Mockingly the monarch answered:
"Think you Nature change will try,
Just to please a lovesick maiden?
Christmas morning he shall die."

"Will you keep the order open
Till the Christmas light shall shine?"
"Yes, if you will dance, ma bella,
Dance this eve, for me and mine."

Lightly tripped the sad-eyed dancer.
"Bravo!" cried the courtiers all;
"Surely never was such dancing,—
Will she neither faint nor fall?"

Through the long hours dancing always,—
When the monarch paused to dine,
Quick the dancer seized his goblet,
Dropped a powder in the wine.

By and by the royal eyelids
Drooped, while watch the dancer kept,
Never pausing, till, o'erpowered,
Deep and sound the monarch slept.

Then she locked the outer chamber,
Suffered none to enter there,
And the slow hours found her watching
While he slumbered in his chair.

Rang the bells on Christmas morning,
Yet not one awoke the King,
While the maiden, hoping, fearing,
Waited, life or death to bring.

When the heavy eyes had opened
As the second dawn appeared,
"Is it morning?" cried the monarch.
"Yes, sire, and my heart is cheered."

" 'T is the morning after Christmas."
"You have tricked me!" cried the King.
"Sire, forget not what you promised;
To your royal word I cling."

"Maiden, bravely have you acted;
Yes, your lover shall go free,—
And your story, how you saved him,
Never shall forgotten be."

. . . . . .

Through the years it still goes ringing,
Told in cottage, court, and grove,
Of the deep and true devotion
Of the Spanish dancer's love.

SHADOWS.

THE sun is sinking in the west,
The shades of evening fall,
The hush of sweet repose is felt
Descending over all.

Historic shadows for a while
Can live for us again,
Can smile and sigh, and laugh and weep,
In joy, or bitter pain.

They fade, and into silence pass,
While o'er the misty scene,
The mellow light of memory
Reveals a world serene.

What does it matter, joy or woe,
Provided all have played
The parts assigned them in Life's game,
That motley masquerade?

Yet some have danced that fain would sigh;
Some fought that fain would love.
Ambition some hath led along
To heights unseen above.

The touch of Circumstance, they claim,
Has changed the fate of hearts,
Has formed the courtier, armed the swain,
Pulled down the man of parts.

Yet Fate is like a mighty mist
That wraps the world around.
The objects seen are not the same
By various mortals found.

The mist steals into people's hearts,
And there begins its play.
For what it finds it works upon,
Just in Dame Nature's way.

There lurk the secret springs of life.
There rest the fateful cords
That bind the world and move mankind,
Both serfs and mighty lords.

Here is the secret of the Sphinx,
Sought for by seers of old,
By maidens fair, by lovers brave,
By warriors strong and bold.

The world's great drama moves along;
The shadows come and go,—
Yet ever at their hearts is seen
This spring of joy and woe.

Though actors play the self-same parts,
They differently move;
Where one is swayed by war or fame,
Another dreams of love.

The old, old play! How long it lasts!
With interest ever new,
With never ceasing energy,
With smiles and tears a few,—

Still goes the drama on and on.
The curtains rise and fall.
We play our parts, then go our way,
But shadows, one and all.

THE BELFRY CHIMES.

IN the lofty belfry swinging,
Curtained with the webs of time,
Hung the bells, their clappers clinging,
Waiting for the hour of ringing,
Ringing forth the New Year chime.

Slow the minutes passed, and slower,
And the clock upon the stair,
Time, the gleaner and the sower,
Bent his wrinkled figure lower;
On his face a look of care.

For his yearly hours were numbered,
And his gifts, for weal or woe,
Burdened souls, or unencumbered,
All alike now softly slumbered,
Waiting for the morning's glow.

And expectant shadows trembled,
While the snow fell softly down
From the fleecy clouds assembled;
Till the sleeping place resembled,
Magic-touched, a fairy town.

Hark! the belfry's highest rafter
Seemed with strange new life astir,
Quickly following thereafter
Came a sound like muffled laughter,
Or of wings the rush and whir.

With a ringing clash and clangor
Woke each bell to sudden life,
Throwing off its erstwhile languor,
Glorying in clash and clangor,
Like a bugle-call to strife.

Reveling in swinging, flinging
Out upon the waiting air
All the echoes, swiftly springing
Into life and being, bringing
Sounds that long had lingered there.

Sounds of gladness, and of sorrow,
Solemn dirge, and wedding bell,
Whispering a bright to-morrow,
Or a gleam of hope to borrow
From high Heaven's citadel.

Sounds of sweet and solemn chanting
And of supplication's tone,
Asking, in full faith of granting,
All that Hope has been implanting
In the human heart alone.

Christmas chimes, or full, or thinner,
Ring of peace the hopeful call;
Bearded man, or young beginner,
Good and bad, both saint and sinner,
"Pax vobiscum," over all.

Born of echoes, then, what wonder
If, from out the rafters' shelves,
Bursting all their bonds asunder,
Peeping out the chimes from under,
Flocked a troop of fairy elves!

Who shall say, among the forces
Ruling in this world of ours,
Joys' and hopes' and sorrows' sources
May not find far deeper courses
Than are reckoned by the powers?

So the elves of high Ambition,
Industry, and Hope, and Fame,
Courage, Love, and just Contrition,
Energy, and good Condition,
Public Spirit, fair of name,

Enterprise, forever needed
In this crowding, rushing world,
Good Advice, so seldom heeded;
All these elves advanced, receded,
And, like snowflakes, danced and whirled.

Whirled within the dim enclosure,
While the pealing chimes rang on;
Leaped and danced, with strange composure,
Echoes of the bells' disclosure
Of a time long past and gone.

Suddenly new spirit seized them.
Enterprise first led the way,
With a merry thought that pleased them,

And a mocking smile that teased them,
Ruling in their revels gay.

To the bells' deep hearts they floated,
Each one seized a swaying tongue;
While a moment, silent-throated
Hung the chimes, then faintly noted,
O'er the sleeping town they swung,

Carrying a benediction,
Blessings in an elfish guise,
Falling like a pleasing fiction,
In a world of fault and friction,
From the snow-besprinkled skies.

In the morn the sleeping city
Woke to enterprise and power;
Woke to life both wise and witty,
Filled with justice and with pity,
Influential from that hour.

Would the New Year chimes could carry
Messages that all might hear.
Lest the kindly spirits tarry,
Hearken well the voices airy,
Ringing in the glad New Year!

DARKNESS BEFORE DAWN.

NIGHT rules o'er land and sea, with hushed dominion,
A silent power that holds mankind in thrall,
And, from the darkest dusk of early morning,
Sends forth a mist which weighs upon the soul.
It steals along, a secret foeman, lurking
To overthrow the courage of the world.
For this, the hour wherein the vital forces
Are at their lowest ebb, is meetly due
To blackness and to darkness of the spirit.
And if within the secret heart of man
Exists a doubt of strength, or of his fitness
To play the part assigned him in the world,
If his ambitions waver in the balance,
Perchance have been o'erthrown, or beaten down,
If cares or troubles vex him, or in illness
Or pain he tossing lies upon his bed,
If an unwhispered doubt of trusted friendship,
Or secret fear of any hidden foe,
If thoughts of daily bread intrude upon him,
Or cares of riches prey upon his mind,
If thoughts of absent dear ones come before him
Or memories of faces loved and lost,
If careless words or thoughtless smiles or frownings

Disturb the pinions of the brooding night,
To all alike, the happy, and the stricken,
The poor, the rich, the well content, the vain,
The young, the old, the carping, and the candid,
To each will come, betimes, the darksome hour.
The whole wide world looks gloomy, dark, and dreary;
There is no light, there can be none for aye.
A stone, an ashen stone, the heart of mortals;
Best so, if hope and life and love are dead.

* * * * * * *

But see! From out the trailing mist, inwoven
With all the soft gray shadows of the night,
Upspringing, like a willow bent not broken,
There comes a figure, flitting like a dream,
And carrying faint odors of the roses
That are, and have been, and are yet to be;
Apart from time, untouched by toil and trouble,
A tender vision, smiling through the gloom.
And, like the whisper of the fragrant pine-tree
That rustles in the gentle evening breeze,
So sound these words of hope, and cheer, and comfort,
That lift the weary load upon the soul.
"Look up! Look up! Behold the daylight coming!
In me, th' Ideal, see a prophet true.
Faith, Hope, and Love indeed are not departed.
A compound of them all, I know the truth
And speak it, wheresoe'er a lifted eyelid
Can see the glory of the coming day,
Or whisper it in thousand, thousand voices
Of Nature, in the earth and sea and air.

And when the dreamy light of waning sunset
Throws mystic shadows o'er the path of night,
I hide myself in golden cloudy splendor,
And bless the world with dreams of what may be,
Whene'er the Golden Rule of my dominion
Shall find its place upon this weary earth.
Give but the smallest touch of grace ideal
To word, or look, or deed, and all is changed.
To see the good, and hope the best in mortals
Will alter ev'ry aspect of the world.
Not held by any faults or crimes of others,
To give a strict account of all one's own,
To reck not others' taunts, if falsely spoken,
But guard with greatest care one's own sharp words,
So, passing by, like idle winds of summer
That stir the leaves, beyond our own control,
These careless, thoughtless deeds and words of others
O'er which, like summer winds, we have no power,
Affect us not. Thus half our woes are ended.
The other half, the doings all our own,
Feel double force of life, so quickly shifted,
Grow gentle in the light of Faith and Hope,
With Love o'erbrooding, like a tender mother,
And nobly rise to words and deeds of worth.
So like the pathway that the mellow moonlight
Makes brilliant o'er a quiet summer sea,
The way of life lies clear and plain before us,
Its brightness equal to the light of day.
And if, though darkness come, we would remember
To be to our Ideal firm and true,
To judge ourselves, not others, and watch always,
We soon should see the mystic light of dawn."

* * * * * * *

She spoke, and as she waved her fair arms upward,
She vanished, like a star behind a cloud.
And lo! Amid a gush of birdlike music,
A thousand voices heralding the light,
The sun streams up, his banners all unfurling,
And scattering the shadows of the night.
And, like those shadows vain, so swiftly fleeing,
All doubts and troubles wear another guise.
Th' Ideal's soul cries out, with lightsome gladness,
"Rejoice! Behold once more the joy of day!"

"DEFEND US FROM OUR ENEMIES."

'MID din of battle, clashing swords,
And flying shot, and bursting shell,
'Mid curses, groans, and dying words,
And all the panoply of Hell,
O'er streams of blood, the God of War
Is importuned, with savage cries,
In voices hoarse that ring afar,
"Defend us from our enemies."

The conflict rages. Thick and fast
Pours down the rain of murderous fire.
White figures reel, and turn aghast
At cruel blows, and base desire
To strike, and kill, and strike again,
Nor mercies show, nor sympathies,
While still rings out the mad refrain:
"Defend us from our enemies."

To conquer, at whatever cost,
To crush opposing forces down,
No matter what is gained or lost
Of justice, right, or fair renown,
And still, like savages of old,
To glory in the cruelties
Of war, and battles manifold!
"Defend us from our enemies."

O human passions, dignified
With specious names, for sad excuse!
Still flourishes the root of pride,—
Still mercy fails to call a truce.
Look, God of Peace, our hearts within;
From envy, greed, hypocrisies,
From open fault, and secret sin,
"Defend us from our enemies."

THE SKIRTS OF CHANCE.

(*"La vraie philosophie consiste en voulant ce qu'on ne peut pas empêcher."*)

"GO forth and conquer life and fate."
Rings out the well known cry
From every turret of romance,
From every mountain high,
From every star, that shines afar,
In Hope's elusive sky.

And all the wandering winds of heaven
Take up the fateful call,
As borne along the ages' path
From man's first sin and fall,
It gains fresh power, each added hour,
To hold the heart in thrall.

With special meaning rings the cry
To all the strong and brave,
Upon whose shoulders burdens fall
As lightly as the wave
Which from the deep can softly sweep,
With power to slay, or save.

Yet swirling forces lie behind,
Like circling clouds advance,
And wheeling, whirl around mankind
The web of Circumstance.
For none may stand, with even hand,
Brushed by the skirts of Chance.

Sad, ruined Tyre, and burning Troy,
And Egypt's ancient fanes,
And India's wondrous lore attest
The strength that appertains
To forces blind, that seem to bind
The human race in chains.

Fair Nineveh, and Babylon,
With all their glories crowned,
And Athens, Wisdom's loved abode,
And Carthage, war-renowned,
All sadly fell beneath the spell
Which wraps the world around.

And even strong imperial Rome,
The ruler of the world,
With martial troops all conquering,
And banners wide unfurled,
Obeyed the laws the great First Cause
Through outer Chaos hurled.

So, brave Ulysses, famed of old
A hero of romance
Was driven forth, and led along,
A wild and merry dance,
Far from his home to sadly roam,
Whirled by the skirts of Chance.

Unhappy Dido, and the man
Whose pious deeds were sung,
Æneas, loved of all the gods,
And praised by every tongue,
Achilles, who strong terror threw
The Trojan arms among;

And Hercules, who stands a name
For strength, in every age,
And sweet Penelope, whose web
Enclosed a heart so sage,
And Priam old, and Hector bold,
Strong in their grief and rage;

And Helen, fairest of her race,
Yet fickle as the breeze
Which wafted her and Paris far
Across Ægean seas,
Or soon, or late, the cords of Fate
Bound fast each one of these.

The gods of old themselves were oft
The victims of mischance.
They fought against impelling Fates
With warlike arrogance,
Yet all their pride was brushed aside
By strenuous skirts of Chance.

But still the hopeful hail we shout,—
The old, old war-cry rings.

"Go forth and conquer life and fate,"
Nor heed the common things
That strew the path of Fortune's wrath
Which spares not serfs or kings.

By what strong talismanic power,
By what deep wizard's spell,
Do sons of men forever hope
Such forces strong to quell?
Or think to be entirely free,
And Fortune's gifts compel?

The riddle of the Sphinx! And yet,
Philosophy one day
Drew from the Sphinx's lips a breath,
A smile, which seemed to say:
"Try for the best, but leave the rest,
Content with Fortune's way."

To e'en desire what Fate has sent,
To smile, in sufferance,
To live, and love, and serve, and strive,
The common heritance,
This is to ride the storm beside,
Upon the skirts of Chance.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

INTO his soul the fire of the East,
The light of India has burned,
With the scorching flame of the great Sun-beast
That devours the fields in his daily feast,
And burns the hopes of the highest and least,
Their desires and ambitions o'erturned.

Into his soul this flame has seared
A knowledge past human ken.
He knows the brood that Adam has reared,
And he knows the hearts to be mocked and feared.
He sees this world as it always appeared
To the Maker of gods and men.

MYTHS.

GONE are the gods of the ancient days,
And gone are the myths of yore.
And gone is belief in half of the chief
Delights of the world before.

Oh, the gods of the elder days are dead,
With their easy-won praise and blame;
And we all may chaff, and sneer, and laugh,
With never a thought of shame.

Yet once, they had power of life and death,
And to mock them was deemed a crime.
So pause now and then, ye women and men,
For the myths of a by-gone time.

PROTEUS.

FROM out the sounding summer sea,
With dancing ebb and flow,
The dashing waves brought back to me
A dream of long ago.

The olden gods not yet are dead,
But only hid away
In rock, or cave, or river-bed,
Where Doubt still bids them stay.

So, in the golden afternoon,
Before my dreaming eyes
Stood mighty Proteus, but full soon
He shifted his disguise.

And now he danced upon the shore,
And now he fled afar,—
Now gave the lion's mighty roar,
Now beamed like twinkling star.

Anon he frowned; the darkened sky
Reflected all his gloom.
Anon he smiled; once more on high
The sun forsook his tomb.

I watched his changing forms; then caught
And held him, though he strove.
"Now tell me, seer, the answer sought,
In life, and hope, and love."

A glance of fire,—a flash of flame,—
A dash of ocean-spray,—
A rushing breeze, with willful aim
To bear the god away.

He strove to flee, with mighty will,
But still I held him fast,
And would not let him go, until
He spoke the word at last.

Now wondrous wonder I beheld!
He changed to figure human,
And lo! within my arms I held—
A sweet capricious *woman!*

THE JEWELED PORTALS OF THE ORIENT.

THE morning stars together sang their song,—
The winds of heaven breathed soft, and faint, and low.
A hush was over all the world's great throng,
And sleep enwrapped the earth in folds of snow.

The branching boughs with sparkling diamonds hung,—
The passing clouds were touched with ruby light.
An amethystine glow its brightness flung
Across the eastern sky, dispelling night.

And lo! before the sun arose on high,
A silent hand threw open wide the door
That leads to Life Eternal in the sky,
Where sorrow, care, and trouble are no more.

The gates of pearl swung wide, and, freed from sin,
A pure white soul from earthly troubles went
To Heavenly glories, as she passed within
The jeweled portals of the Orient.

THE DAWN OF HOPE.

"LET there be light!" the message rang,
And Chaos, trembling, heard.
A new world into being sprang,
Obedient to the Word.

So, bowed in grief, the heart shall hear,
Across the gloom of night,
That hopeful call, resounding clear
Again,—"Let there be light!"

THE SONG OF THE PASSING YEARS.

I SING the song of the passing years,
Of the passing years, with their rush and whirl,
Some filled with laughter, and some with tears,
For each merry boy and girl,
Now caught in the sweeping swirl,
The struggle of hopes and fears.
With all the strength of youthful swing,
They follow the course of Time, and sing
The song of the passing years.

I sing the song of the passing years,
Of Hope's bright glow in the youthful heart,
When every breeze is a voice that cheers,
And the sun, with a golden dart,
Points straight to the busy mart,
Where the goal of Success appears;
And Fortune but waits to smile, and fling
Her favors to those who blithely sing
The song of the passing years.

I sing the song of the passing years,
Through storm and sunshine, cloud and rain,
Through grinding work, and bitter sneers,
And sorrow, care, and pain;

Till at last is found again
That Faith in mankind, which clears
The clouds from sight, and will softly bring
The echoes of Youth to the voice of Spring,
The song of the passing years.

I sing the song of the passing years,
Of work accomplished, and honors won,
Of golden grain, as the harvest nears,
In the glow of the setting sun.
For the hours shall merrily run,
While the smile of Love endears.
Each flying minute shall rippling ring,
And streams, and meadows, and woodlands sing
The song of the passing years.

I sing the song of the passing years,
As the shades of evening hover down,
And many a twinkling light uprears
O'er the busy, bustling town,
With its pride of the world's renown.
But the Wind of Destiny veers,—
The lights are extinguished, the shadows cling,
Yet the voices of Night still softly sing
The song of the passing years.

I sing the song of the passing years,
Of the flame that shines to the very end,
With a steady glow, like the whirling spheres
That follow their orbits' trend.

In that strong, white light, shall blend
Life's colors of hopes and fears.
At the touch of Creation's mightiest string,
The Heart of the Universe grandly shall sing
The song of the passing years.

THE STORM.

RUSHING through an ink-black sky,
Soaring past the tree-tops high,
Tossing swift the bending boughs,
Shouting wildly, strength to rouse,
Chanting now a strain of fear,
Drawing near, and yet more near,
Singing low a soft refrain,
Gathering force to strike again,
Breaking, with a thundering roar,
All the fields and hamlets o'er,
Sweeping in its mighty sway
Everything upon its way,
Till its fever-laden breath
Seems the harbinger of Death,—
Whirling, plunging, reeling, swift,
Pounding, roaring, winds adrift,
Striking, breaking, crashing down,
Pouring floods, the earth to drown,
Cracking, hissing, shrieking loud,
From a thunder-bringing cloud,
Moaning, wailing, sobbing low,
Quaking, in the lightning's glow,
Tearing, tossing through the blast,
Rending, swinging, flinging fast

Thunder-bolts, from skyward hurled,—
While the wreckage of the World,
Awful in its mighty form,
Strews the pathway of the Storm.

MARIE ANTOINETTE IN THE CONCIERGERIE.

NO hope! no hope! the days go by,
Each one athrob with fears;
And e'en that poor resource denied,
The sad relief of tears.

For Queens may not, as others, weep,
May not like them bow down
Before the sorrows of the heart,—
But grief and pain must drown.

And still must bear the queenly head
Just as in days of old,
When all went well, while yet it wore
The queenly crown of gold.

And none must see "the Austrian"
Bewail her vanished state,
Or show the grief within her heart,
Howe'er so deep and great.

Yet motherhood might surely speak,
Might surely raise a hand
To save her son from punishment.
The world would understand.

Alas! not even this could be.
She could not e'en be spared
The sound of childish cries, and blows
Which never could be shared.

Her kingly husband dead and gone,
Her friends dispersed, or fled,
Or executed by the law
Which bowed *her* queenly head.

Ah! surely never did a Queen
Pass through a deeper flood
Of tears and great unhappiness,
Of sorrow, grief, and blood.

But through it all she bore herself
With dignity and calm.
And no one ever saw her flinch.
Or beg forgetful balm.

So great a woman in her woe,
Heroic, calm, serene;
In all her days of majesty
Never so much the Queen.

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

ACROSS the darkened Eastern sky,
Shone forth the wondrous star
By which the Magi straight were led
Where, soft within the lowly bed,
The Christ-child beamed afar.

So runs the story. Still on high
The stars from heaven shine.
Still wise men pause, and listen well
When childish lips their knowledge tell,
A wisdom half divine.

Hushed is the whirl of restless strife,
And stilled the thoughts of fear,
While, from the lips of endless youth,
Faith speaks the everlasting truth,
For all the world to hear.

A meaning new shines out in life;
The Spring of Hope has come,
And Winter, laughing out in glee,
Twines holly-wreaths of memory
Around the hearth and home.

Thus, whensoe'er the stars look down
On children sweet and mild,
  Once more within our hearts shall ring
  The praises of the new-born King,
Who came a little child.

For children wear Love's brightest crown,
A precious diadem.
  And, for their sake, each Christmas day
  The stars assume an added ray
From the Star of Bethlehem.

IN SPRINGTIME.

YOU dear little blossoms now blowing,
Fresh, delicate leaves you reveal.
I see you all growing, and growing,
And know just how lovely you feel.

You beautiful flowering hedges,
With birdlings that twitter and call;
You lovely green willows and sedges,
That shoot up so slender and tall,

Don't you feel the sap course through your being?
While every wandering breeze
That whispers of all he is seeing
Brings stories of birds and of bees,

And the life of the world flowing round you
Which vaguely you dream about here.
You are bursting the fetters that bound you,
And claiming your own rightful sphere.

The sunlight now reddens, now blanches;
You grow right along without stop,
And joyfully send out your branches.
There 's plenty of room at the top.

Oh, the breath of the springtime is sweetest,
With joys only Youth can well know.
O season the purest and fleetest,
What pleasure it is, just to grow!

THE DRIFT OF THE AGES.

ADOWN the ages, passing slow,
The voice of Nature calls;
Though kingdoms, thrones, and empires rise,
In turn each empire falls.

The wisdom of Chaldean times
Was wondrous in its day.
The glory of its monarchy
Was slow to fade away.

Assyria, of mighty fame
And palaces renowned,
Fair Babylon a conqueror
In Medes and Persians found.

Both these and Egypt, with its vast
Resources of the Nile,
Were conquered by the mighty force
Of Grecian strength and guile.

And these in turn the Romans swayed,
With pride and glory great,
Till savage hordes laid waste their lands,
And humbled their estate.

Fresh kingdoms in the Northern lands
Divided rank and power;
While o'er the sea, a western world
But waited for its hour.

Still through the rolling centuries
No change does Nature know.
The spring-time buds were just as sweet
Four thousand years ago.

The summer suns and winter rains
Or snows were just the same;
While autumn gales, and days, and nights
No different became.

The same primeval love and hate,
Still rage in human hearts;
And greed of gold and lust of power
Are found in modern marts.

While war continues still its sway,
And might makes right anew,—
The widows' and the orphans' tears
Still battle-fields bedew.

Ah! when will that bright eastern star
Chaldean sages saw
Illumine, with its peaceful beams,
A world of love and law?

Until we follow where it led
In turn each empire falls.
The Golden Rule alone shall last,—
Thus Nature's Maker calls.

LOTUS BLOSSOMS.

OH, the lotus-flower is sleeping
On the bosom of the Nile,
While the stars their watch are keeping,
And the sun is hid awhile.

And the gentle wavelets ripple
In the night's sweet restful breeze,
While the air, with blessings triple,
Rushes past the bending trees.

Oh, the lotus-flower is dreaming,
Dreaming of the days gone by,
Full of pomp and glory seeming,
Thrones and kingdoms soaring high.

Gone are all the wealth and splendor
Of those days so long ago,—
Only memory so tender
Veils them, with its afterglow.

Oh, the lotus-flower is thinking
Of the maiden Dryopë,
And of Lotis, slender, shrinking,
Daughter of the mighty Sea.

Both of these and many others
Sure forgetfulness have found,
Fathers, sisters, wives, and brothers,
In the lotus-leaves renowned.

Oh, the lotus-flower is musing
On its struggles of the past,—
Upward still its pathway choosing,
Through the soil the light at last.

So the mind, through sad surroundings,
Finds its way to light and life,
Upward past the world's confoundings,
Peace at last, through toil and strife.

Oh, the lotus-flower is waking
From its dreams of by-gone days,
And from off its petals shaking
All that still its power delays.

And with wealth of song and story,
Weaving spells of wondrous power,
Egypt, rising in her glory,
Wears, encrowned, the lotus-flower.

THANKSGIVING.

AS did our Pilgrim Fathers brave,
In that dim past, the long ago,
So we their deeds commemorate,
And still give thanks, with heartfelt glow.

Their trials let us ne'er forget.
Bleak Famine stretched across the land,—
An early winter,—frost and cold,—
While red-skinned foes were close at hand.

But cold, and hungry, and beset
With traitors at their very gate,
They held their ground, believing still
That help would come, before too late.

The joy their grateful hearts expressed
In their Thanksgiving Jubilee
Is still reflected in our lives,
The heritage of Liberty.

And so we feast,—remembering well
That debt which we can ne'er repay.
For peace and plenty, joy and love,
Our grateful hearts give thanks to-day.

LOVE'S MESSENGERS.

RIVERS and streamlets that softly flow
Out to the boundless sea,
Breezes that scatter the drifting snow,
Clouds that sail onward so still and slow,
Carry a message from me.

Sunlight with flashes of golden glow
Scattered across the lea,
Moonlight with darts from a silver bow,
Stars that in myriad courses go,
Messengers all shall be.

Forces of Nature, above or below,
Drifting along so free,
Carry a love which they never can know;
Swiftly but blindly they bear it,—and so
Carry my love to thee.

THE ROMMANY RYE.

OH, the voice of the wind is abroad in the world,—
It sings out its secrets on high,
And the voice of the hills echoes, answering back,
In gladsome and laughing reply.
And the dull earth awakens, and quivers to hear
This music of air and of sky,
And one people, at least, can give forth a response,
In the call of the Rommany Rye.

With every breath of the opening flowers,
When the odors of springtime are nigh,
With every blade of the sweet dewy grass,
Or the peeping of violets shy,
The call is sent forth to our work-burdened world
To lay its cares presently by,
And list to the whispers of freedom and joy
In the call of the Rommany Rye.

And the heat of the summer, when spread o'er the land,
And the sound of the crickets' shrill cry
Give glad invitation to join in the song,
With never a wherefore or why,—

The song of the earth, and the swing of the stars,
As through their swift orbits they fly.
With a sure understanding of Nature's own words
Comes the call of the Rommany Rye.

The fruits of the autumn, the full golden sheaves
Of grain, in abundant supply,—
E'en the snows of the winter, in fairy-like trace,
With the song universal comply.
For the joy and the glory and freedom of life,
With never a heartache or sigh,
Ah, who has not longed, when o'erburdened with toil,
For the call of the Rommany Rye?

THE IDEAL.

WITH just a touch of grace ideal,
To what is worn, or said, or thought,
A hint of something vague, unreal,
There comes a glory new, unsought.

We cannot find its secret power,
Although we search the sea and sky,
When clouds of storm and trouble lower,
Or when the sun shines out on high.

Th' Ideal ever flees before us,
And yet beneath its sway we bow.
We feel its mighty magic o'er us,
But what it *is*, we may not know.

JOAN, THE FAIR MAID OF KENT.

HER sweet blue eyes smile back at us
Across the long past years,
With ne'er a trace of sadness there,
Or any hint of tears.

And yet, 'mid courtly pageantries,
The pomp of rich and great,
Not always were her fortunes bright,
However high her state.

But she had woman's fortitude,
And tact, and charm, as well;
And wondrous beauty added, too,
Which casts a magic spell.

She wielded almost regal power,
This Princess calm, serene.
Right gladly would the English world
Have hailed her, as their Queen.

A DREAM.

IN the dim watches of the starless night,
There came to me the friend of other days.
And gladly talked we of the infinite
Occurrences, since last she met my gaze.

And joy was in my heart. I loved her well;
And her companionship was sweet and old.
But ah! an icy wind blew o'er us fell,
And suddenly her soft, fair hands were cold,
While from her garments came the musty smell
Of cool, soft earth, and springy, damp, green mould.

OUR BOOKS.

OUR books are like our friends, I ween,
And suited to as many moods;
Amongst them is so surely seen
Variety, which all includes.

And as, within our hearts or minds,
A welcome or a kindly look
For each new friend one always finds,
Just so we welcome each new book.

But having found the ones best loved,
With constancy that never ends
We cherish in our hearts, unmoved,
The love of both our books and friends.

UNDER SIR WALTER'S UMBRELLA.

FULL many a romance was told
'Neath crumbling walls of ruin old,
By troubadour, or lover bold,
To Donna Bella.
But love needs not such aids as these.
Soft words are said 'neath skies and trees;
Nay, more than once, e'en, if you please,
'Neath an umbrella.

Sir Walter Scott's first early flame!
Miss Willamina Stuart's name
Is handed down to later fame
To have this glory.
For, coming out of church one day,
It rained, Sir Walter passed that way
And saw her home, with time to say
The old, old story.

They did not wed; but often will
One see Miss Willamina still
Flit through the lines Sir Walter's quill
Traced with precision.

As Ellen, Lady of the Lake,
And Margaret, whom Minstrels wake,
Dame Green-Mantle, Matilda, make
A lovely vision.

Dear gentle lady, thanks are due
That sudden rainfall,—also you,
For giving us the pleasure true
Of your sweet power.
In our dark rainy days, secure,
We can the woes of life abjure.
Sir Walter 's still a shelter sure
From trouble's shower.

VIGOR IMMORTALIS.

LIKE some tall pine-tree, bending in the blast,
Beneath whose branches many weaker things
Find shelter, till the storms of life are past,
So stands the man whose friendship comfort brings.

A character of never-failing strength,
Unswerving from the right,—humane withal,
And whose opinions, sifted out at length,
Are full of wisdom, recognized by all.

From such a soul, this fleeting, passing breath
Can never take away its potent will.
For us who knew him there can be no death,—
His thoughts, his character, are with us still.

ARCADY.

ACROSS our heart-strings, now and then,
With sudden joy afraid,
Is struck a magic chord, as when
The pipes of Pan first played.

A glorious flush o'er sea and land!
We know not whence its light.
The rush of wavelets o'er the strand,
The breath of flowers bright!

Ah, sudden wind of Destiny!
You sing but half the truth.
'T is but a breeze from Arcady,—
Home of Romance and Youth!

EASTER.

THE dews of morn are softly shed,
The wind's swift course is run;
Each fragrant flower lifts its head,
As though to spurn its lowly bed;
While drifting clouds blush rosy red,
To greet the Easter sun.

DAFFODILS.

THE sunshine of Life, on its wandering way,
Over meadows, and rivers, and hills,
Was captured by Friendship, and hidden away
In the hearts of the daffodils.

SERENADE.

NIGHT-WINDS, rock the bending willow,
Birds are calling soft and low,
Fan with sleep my lady's pillow,
Dreams bestow.

Stars of night, forever shining,
Pierce all clouds, however deep;
Magic voice of night, repining,
Lull her sleep.

SEPTEMBER FLOWERS.

WHEN sweet September's smiles appear,
The brightest flowers of all the year
Delight our eyes.
The aster and the golden-rod,
In autumn's sunshine wave and nod
Their glad surprise.

And so the sweetest girls of all
Appear on earth in early fall,
With sunshine rife.
Their hearts are like the golden-glow,
Whose blossoms always gaily show
The joy of life.

NOVEMBER.

BACK of cold gray clouds are shining
Stars, if we could only see.
While in gloom our hearts are pining,
Back of cold gray clouds are shining
Stars of comfort, ne'er declining,
Hope, and love, and sympathy.

LOOK FROM ABOVE.

A THISTLE on the highway grew,
And spread its branches wide,
With prickly thorns in fullest view,
The blossoms hid inside.

A droning bee flew overhead,
And touched those flowers tall,
And on their honey richly fed,
Nor saw the thorns, at all.

Just so, if from above we gaze
Within the human heart,
We only feel its kindly ways,—
No rough or thorny dart.

PENTECOST.

A RUSHING, mighty wind across the sky,
A swirling, swinging, roaring, ringing breath
Which seems to fill the world, as, flying by,
It sweeps the pathway both of life and death.

Into our hearts it blows, and bears away
All evil thoughts, all hate, and strife, and sin,
All dust of hopes and fears and sorrows gray,
To let the light of love and truth within.

So Charity shall come, a living flame,
A fire divine, a firm and steady glow,
The pulsing light of life, for aye the same,
To make us tender kindly words to know.

Thus, year by year, the nodding, bending trees,
Whose sentient branches swiftly bear along
The cleansing, rushing, purifying breeze,
Shall sing Earth's mighty Pentecostal song.

BALLADES, RONDEAUX, ETC.

BALLADE OF RARE BOOKS.

ON vellum white as mountain snow,
A treasure past all doubt,
A book Corvinus once might show
Before the Turkish rout;
Where miniatures still smile or pout,
Initials gold, may be,—
These are the books we read about
But very seldom see.

A Virgil bound long, long ago
By Magnus, none may flout;
Perhaps the royal arms there glow,
Or wondrous flowers sprout.
An Elzevir, uncut throughout,
An Aldus, high art's key,—
These are the books we read about
But very seldom see.

Ovid, with drawings which we owe
Latour, grown old and stout.
The Pompadour's Molière should know
Some secrets not devout.
Voltaire's Montaigne; half due to gout
Those annotations free,—
These are the books we read about
But very seldom see.

ENVOY.

Prince Bibliophile, thy praise we shout!
Château de Chantilly
Contains the books we read about
But very seldom see.

ANOTHER BALLADE OF RARE BOOKS.

WITH *doublure* of satin, *bleu clair*,
Or of rose, sprigged with flowers of May;
Sketches made by Leloir or Lemaire,
Etchings done by Fraipont or Doré;
In bindings of delicate gray,
Red or green, and inlaid as you please,—
Ah! these are the gems of to-day,
The rare books that one seldom sees!

Old vellum, much out of repair,
And smelling of must and decay,
Yet painted with infinite care
By some monk, in the years far away;
With letters illumined and gay,
And scrolls that might wave in the breeze,
With saints that eternally pray,—
The rare books that one seldom sees!

Like a dream from the regions of air,
Come bright visions that waver and sway;
The hearts of sweet maidens so fair
Are the books which completely dismay,—
For they throw into sad disarray
All our preconceived notions of ease.
One can find—but with thought and delay—
The rare books that one seldom sees!

ENVOY.

Prince, choose as you will, who can say?
One must take what Dame Fortune decrees;
The chance of a girl's yea or nay,
The rare books that one seldom sees!

BALLADE OF THE DEEP SEA.

WITH the breath of the ocean astir in the air,
And the swish of the sea on a desolate shore,
And the hauling of nets, with the fish running fair,
While the tide lashes out against each struggling oar,
Ah! none would a fisherman's fortune deplore.
For the ocean has secrets so mighty to keep
That none but the fisher-folk fathom the store
Of the marvelous wonders within the great deep.

Though the shores are all rocky and barren and bare,
And the sea finds its way to the homes' very door,
Yet the waves' invitation to do and to dare
Holds a power which touches all hearts to their core.
And no hardy fisherman ever forswore
The love of the sea for the love of his sleep;
Like a siren's sweet call comes the ocean's mad roar
Of the marvelous wonders within the great deep.

The roistering winds bring a tumult of care,
The rain oft descends in a steady downpour,—
The scent of the brine over eyes, lips, and hair,
Like the charm of the sea ever clings more and more.
But when, through a rift in the clouds, sunbeams soar,

Like a promise of glory, they splendidly sweep
  Across and within depths unknown heretofore
Of the marvelous wonders within the great deep.

Envoy.

Mystic Ocean, so wondrously sweet is thy lore,
  Though men may still work, and though women
    may weep,
Yet ever thy billows will sing, as of yore,
  Of the marvelous wonders within the great deep.

BALLADE OF ANTIQUE FURNITURE.

THEY stand, those household gods of yore,
With memories both grave and gay,
Our pride and joy, for more and more
We treasure, even in decay,
These relics of a by-gone day.
Our nation's history they know,—
State secrets they could ne'er betray,
This furniture of long ago.

With patient care we now restore
The table, chair, or old *buffet*,
Which formerly our fathers swore
Was rubbish, fit to cast away,
Or store 'neath attic shadows gray,—
A Chippendale, or Shearer,—lo!
We bring it forth, in fine array,
This furniture of long ago.

This ancient rack a musket bore
Which figured in some gallant fray.
A maiden's fingers wandered o'er
That spinet's keys, and learned to play
Some old-time, old-world roundelay.
And whether friend or bitter foe
That bed has sheltered, who can say?
This furniture of long ago.

ENVOY.

Time, in your never-ceasing sway,
  Which causeth all things' overthrow,
Oh, touch with tender hands, we pray,
  This furniture of long ago.

'NEATH MOON, OR STAR, OR CHINESE-LANTERN LIGHT.

(Ballade.)

IN Arcady, a thousand years ago,
  Or more, or less, for time is nothing there,
A youth and maiden wandered to and fro,
  With ne'er a thought of trouble or of care.
  Enough for them the mellow evening air,
The whispers borne upon the listening breeze,
The thrushes warbling in the bending trees,
  For Love and Life made all the landscape bright;
And Arcady is still the same for these,
  'Neath moon, or star, or Chinese-lantern light.

A stately castle, with a moat below,
  With draw-bridge, dungeon, and a winding-stair,
And armed to brave and conquer any foe,
  Held, in its chambers desolate and bare,
  A damsel, fair as day, with shining hair.
Beneath her window rang a minstrel's glees,—
She heard this troubadour from o'er the seas
  Proclaim himself her true and trusty knight.
Nor bolts nor bars could alter Love's decrees
  'Neath moon, or star, or Chinese-lantern light.

Amid the glitter and the worldly glow
Of Ranelagh's or Vauxhall's enticing snare,
While still went on the everlasting show
Of wealth and glory sparkling everywhere,
Two figures strolled adown an alley fair.
The lady who was coy and hard to please
Believed no vows, till sworn on bended knees.
With softened radiance was the scene bedight,
For Cupid's arrows fly with equal ease
'Neath moon, or star, or Chinese-lantern light.

ENVOY.

Princess, the times have changed, but Love's old keys
Can still unlock the hearts of all degrees.
And Beauty still shall bless us with its sight
While Time and Love shall sing their jubilees,
'Neath moon, or star, or Chinese-lantern light.

BALLADE OF FRENCH NOVELS.

LET Balzac depict humankind
In many a fashion and phase;
Let Gautier, with wonderful mind,
Throw a charm o'er the world which he sways,
Even while, disapproving, we gaze
On his creatures with smiles *débonnaires*.
But we walk in far merrier ways
With Dumas, in *Les Trois Mousquetaires*.

Cherbuliez enchants us; enshrined
In our hearts, *Tartarin*, of Daudet's;
While Zola, strong, true, unrefined,
Shows the tricks that heredity plays.
Maupassant, who was crazed by his craze,
Has a style that is sure to ensnare;
Yet we gladly drift back to past days
With Dumas, in *Les Trois Mousquetaires*.

Who so surely has never been blind
To the faults of the world he would raise?
Who so truly our heartstrings can bind?
For we notice, with awe and amaze,
In ourselves the same feelings that blaze
In these figments of earth and of air,
And we see what Life's mirror portrays,
With Dumas, in *Les Trois Mousquetaires*.

ENVOY.

Fame, give other novels due praise;
Yet they none of them all can compare
In the charm of fact, fancy, or phrase,
With Dumas, in *Les Trois Mousquetaires*.

BALLADE OF FORGOTTEN THINGS.

OLD school-books, with your backs so worn and gray
With time and dust, a hapless, limping throng,
The friends with whom we whiled the hours away
In younger days, with laughter and with song,
The days wherein, with youthful shoulders strong,
We felt that we could move the world,—egad!
Perchance attempted it, till proved quite mad
To try to stir it, by a single jot.
Alas! old friends, that we should have to add
The many things we 've known and have forgot.

Those clear accounts of any gallant fray
Wherein the gods themselves took part among
The Greek and Trojan heroes, how they sway
Within our minds, where once a mighty thong
Bound ev'ry fact, and linked them all along.
With mathematic triumphs, lass or lad,
Perchance we once were crowned; and record bad
In science, or in language, we had not.
Alas! that these have passed, like any fad,
The many things we 've known and have forgot.

But Time has wiped out for us, day by day,
Some memories of grievous hurt and wrong.
For youth is unforgiving, truth to say,
And bitter are the wounds dealt by the tongue.
While in our hearts was thrust a deeper prong
When one we loved was wrapped in death's cold plaid,
With ev'ry grace and beauty nobly clad.
So now,—we like new books, a lively plot,
A stream, a line, to throw to pike or shad
The many things we 've known and have forgot.

ENVOY.

Friends, since it must be so, we 'll e'en be glad.
For, with the bright things, many that are sad
Have passed away. It is the common lot,
And none may keep forever *all* he had;
The many things we 've known and have forgot.

THE HARLEQUIN.

(Ballade.)

HO! masters, thought you I was dead,
And passed from off life's stage?
I would not have it lightly said,
That Folly's heritage
Had passed away, with knight and page,
With halberd, mail, or queue;
In modern courts, a gilded cage,
You wear the motley too.

When Study far from pageants fled
And hid herself in rage,
Though bitter tears she hourly shed,
She could not disengage
Her thoughts from Folly's appanage.
No matter what you do,
Pale nymph, though wise as Eastern Mage,
You wear the motley too.

If sunlight o'er the Earth is shed,
Her storms and tears assuage.
Bright color over all is spread,
A gladsome privilege

To deck the world; for wars may wage,
Yet laughter comes anew.
So Mother Earth, your children pledge!
You wear the motley too.

ENVOY.

Ho! prince, philosopher, and sage,
I claim you comrades true;
For in your hearts, 'spite youth or age,
You wear the motley too.

BALLADE OF FASHIONS.

WHEN brave King Francis ruled in France
And courtiers said: "*Le roi s'amuse,*"
They followed quick, with eager glance,
To see the beauty he might choose;
Where, well-bedecked from crown to shoes,
With farthingale outspread for show,
She stood, a dream of pinks or blues,—
Where are the styles of long ago?

In later years, through maze or dance,
The same large skirts and sleeves refuse
To yield their place, by any chance;
For still a courtly grace indues
A fashion which that court can use.
State secrets oft such sleeves might know
Which gladly now would we peruse,—
Where are the styles of long ago?

Fair Anne of Austria's romance!
When "laughing in her sleeve" she views
Great Richelieu retreat, advance,
To tread a *sarabande*, and bruise
His pride and love. Each age imbues
Its styles and times. Reform is slow.
Now Marie Antoinette's mode wooes,—
Where are the styles of long ago?

ENVOY.

Dames of the past, thanks for these cues,
No more we need to ask, for lo!
We daily find, in Fashion News,
Where are the styles of long ago!

THE PRICE OF TAMERLANE.

(Ballade.)

ONCE, in a busy street,
There wandered to and fro
A poet, with weary feet
And step uncertain, slow.
He knew not where to go;
For the printers, with disdain,
Repulsed, we trow, luck's tidal flow,
The price of Tamerlane.

With fancies soft and sweet,
With words that burn and glow,
Alive with fervid heat,
Yet pure as mountain snow,
The poem could naught bestow
To ease sharp hunger's pain.
How much we owe the poet.—Lo!
The price of Tamerlane!

Time passes, and we greet
With reverential show,
Of that poem so complete
The first edition, for oh!

With both fire and time its foe,
Two copies alone remain!
And down we throw a fortune, though
The price of Tamerlane.

ENVOY.

O Edgar Allan Poe,
This thought should your soul sustain
Through all your woe, could you but know
The price of Tamerlane!

BALLADE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

BEHOLD my lady's gay sedan,
Upholstered all in brightest blue!
Half hidden by her costly fan,
Her laughing eyes are looking through
The throng of beaux, a gorgeous crew,
Who at her feet their homage pay.
The broken hearts are not a few,—
And ev'ry dog must have his day.

Here comes the witty Sheridan:—
"Madame, I pray believe me true.
Though others' foibles I might scan,
Of course, I ne'er intended *you*."
Here 's Garrick, kissing Peggy's shoe;
There 's Johnson, rolling on his way,
And Reynolds, Burke, and Montagu,—
And ev'ry dog must have his day.

With sword and snuff-box statesmen plan;
And hark! the vastly fine *frou-frou*
Of rich brocade on maid and man,
And laces rare, and jewels too.
In minuets, gavottes, (quite new,)
White arms and graceful figures sway.
Time seems but made to jest and woo,
And ev'ry dog must have his day

ENVOY.

O wigs and powder, patches, queue,
We love you dearly,—in a play!
But wear you? Zounds! You 'd never do!
And ev'ry dog must have his day.

TO SARAH, DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

(Rondeau.)

DUCHESS divine, thy regal air,
Thy smile, thine eyes, the world ensnare.
Friend of Queen Anne, and rightly placed
Beside the throne thy fortune traced;
A warrior's fate thine own doth share.

Malbrouck s'en-va, s'en-va-t-en guerre!
Though reunited are the pair,
No more art thou by Anne embraced,
Duchess divine!

Yet Marlbro's constant love doth swear
That none to vie with thee may dare,—
Or think of thee grown old, disgraced,
Bewigged and snuff-boxed, painted-faced;
But always young,—commanding,—fair,—
Duchess divine!

TO A SWEET WILD ROSE.

(Rondeau.)

O SWEET wild rose, in early morn,
Ere gleams the sun o'er wheat and corn,
You catch the blushes of the sky,
And, keeping them, you thus outvie
The very clouds whose tints are worn.

And in your heart, with laughing scorn,
You hide the sweetness which is born
Of wild-wood secrets soft and shy,
O sweet wild rose!

And yet, while you the world adorn,
By you its feelings oft are torn.
Though many lovers round you sigh,
You do not deign to make reply.
Alas! No rose without a thorn!
O sweet wild rose!

OVER THE TEA-CUPS.

(Rondeau.)

THE cup that cheers the heart and mind,
Black tea or green, whate'er its kind,
Sure comfort brings to ev'ry state.
E'en Johnson was not obdurate;
Nor Mistress Thrale to greatness blind.

What glowing fortunes do we find
And read, in leaves by chance assigned,
Tea-leaves, which make the book of Fate
The cup that cheers.

With dainty head a bit inclined,
Sweet lips tell secrets half divined,
O'er cups of tea; while eyes dilate,
And friends weave stories long and great.
Thus Friendship, Love, have both enshrined
The cup that cheers!

10

TO VIRGIL.

(Rondeau.)

Translated from HORACE, Book 4th, Ode 12th.

O VIRGIL, wise in Time's decree,
The spring has come o'er land and sea.
The soft and pleasant Thracian gales
Waft boats along with bounding sails,—
No snow-fed streams deface the lea.

The birds build nests in every tree.
Arcadian shepherds glad and free
Pipe out their songs, o'er hills and dales,
O Virgil wise.

The drought has brought strong thirst to thee.
Come, bring a box of nard to me;
We 'll ope a cask, which never fails
To drive dull care where naught avails.
A little while, forget to be,
O Virgil, wise.

THE GRADUATING CLASS.

TO THE WORLD AND THE FATES, GREETING.

(Rondeau.)

TO you we bow, O World unknown!
To you, O Fates, upon your throne,
Who parcel out, with even hand,
The changeful lots at your command,
With faces hard and cold as stone!

We know to you and you alone
The secrets of our lives are shown.
None may your future power withstand,—
To you we bow.

And yet, in not too humble tone,
We dare remind you we are grown
A strong, courageous, lusty band,
Quite ready to possess the land.
O Fates, let Youth but take its own,—
To you we bow.

FANCY.

(Rondeau.)

WOULD Fancy thee direct, what bliss
Were thine; a metamorphosis
In all thy life, since in thy heart
A maid from all the rest apart,
'Twixt them and her a deep abyss.

Love's magic in her lightest kiss;
A trifle worldly wise, I wis,—
Her lips (a bow for Cupid's dart,)
Would fancy thee.

Her face and figure naught amiss;
She 'd sing and play, past scorn or hiss,—
Bright, cheerful, wise, and never tart,
A paragon! nay, do not start,
Art thou quite sure a maid like this
Would fancy *thee?*

FOR HER.

(A Rondeau-Valentine.)

I'D offer her a priceless crown,
Begirt with gems of great renown,
Did Fate but give that lucky hap.
I 'd toss a fortune in her lap,
Could this bring smiles upon me down.

For oh, the dullness of this town
When she I love away has flown!
Had I a Fortunatus cap,
I 'd doff for her.

But ah! the greatest treasures known
Are naught beside her simplest gown.
Her winsome ways all hearts entrap.
Show me her home upon the map,—
Wings of a dove I fain would own;
I 'd off for her.

SUNSHINE.

(A Rondeau-Valentine.)

THE sunlight shines within her hair,
And turns to gold its tresses fair;
While any vagrant, roving breeze,
With breath as soft as summer seas
Blows o'er her dainty curls, with care.

And in the circumambient air,
These shining curls our hearts ensnare;
While over all, in ecstasies,
The sunlight shines.

But soon, indeed, we are aware
Of something deeper,—past compare,—
A charm of soul, a wit to please,
A smile whose love-light e'er decrees
Whatever place she goes, just *there*
The sunlight shines.

THE VOICE OF YOUTH.

(Rondeau.)

THE voice of Youth rings loud and clear,
With ne'er a thought of any fear
Of foes or dangers, night or day,
Or obstacles to bar the way
Where Fame and Fortune both appear.

Right boldly on the listening ear
The hopeful, hailing notes of cheer
Ring out, and hold the world in sway,
The voice of Youth.

But, with each fast departing year
Our courage wanes,—so very dear
For all life's lessons do we pay;
Goals hard to reach,—joys loath to stay,—
Ah! would that we could always hear
The voice of Youth!

THE VEIL OF TIME.

(Rondeau.).

THE veil of Time, a mystic haze,
Secretes beyond our searching gaze
The Hours to come,—and who can say
If these shall gloomy be, and gray,
Or filled with joyous words of praise?

Perchance, with brilliant thoughts ablaze,
The Hours may dance, in merry maze,
And tear aside, with fingers gay,
The veil of Time.

Unseen, unknown, each future phase
Of life receives a glint and glaze,
A glamour, like a passing play,—
Ourselves the players, day by day,
As slowly, patiently, we raise
The veil of Time.

HAPPY DAYS.

(Rondeau.)

THE happy days that dancing by
Make merry moments madly fly
Bring ev'ry year an added grace,
A sweeter smile upon the face
Which Time does naught but glorify.

Should clouds appear upon the sky,
May threatened storms come never nigh;
But always sunbeams gaily chase
The happy days.

May Fortune ne'er turn cold or shy,
Or illness dim the laughing eye.
And, though the years run on apace,
Look bravely on their swifter race,
And down Time's vista still descry
The happy days.

DANCE MUSIC.

(Rondeau.)

THE dance goes on in merry guise,
With rhythmic sway, and fall, and rise,
And throws its spell that all adore
The merry lads and lassies o'er,
And none its influence denies.

While rosy cheeks and laughing eyes
Provoke full many lovers' sighs;
Though maids are coy, and youths implore,
The dance goes on.

For, with a charm that never dies,
To youthful hearts its power applies.
And, though no longer, as of yore,
One find one's place upon the floor,
Be sure within one's heart, if wise,
The dance goes on.

AT THE ALTAR.

(Rondeau.)

A BRIDAL veil thrown o'er her face,
Of filmy, rare, and costly lace,
She stands, a sweet and blushing bride,
Her heart's true sov'reign lord beside,—
A picture, full of artless grace.

The marriage vows float into space,—
The music runs its rhythmic race;
And once again is glorified
A bridal veil.

And as the years shall run apace,
May naught the picture e'er displace,
Or spoil their world of loving pride.
For trouble ne'er will hearts divide,
If only viewed through Love's embrace,
A bridal veil.

THE TRUEST LOVE.

(Rondeau.)

THE truest love is not the praise
Of smiling eyes, or winsome ways,
Or traits which any heart would move
To choose a mate, and cease to rove.
However fine, these ne'er upraise.

When youthful charms first meet our gaze,
And smiles and sunshine crown the days,
We can not tell from Venus' dove
The truest love.

And only those blessed by the fays
With that sweet charm which all men sways
Have power their very faults to prove
An added virtue's treasure-trove.
Ah! love like this forever stays,—
The truest love.

IN AUTUMN.

(Rondeau.)

THE flying leaves swift whirling go,
With whispers faint, and moanings low,
That tell of coming winter's days,
When far from earth the sunlight strays,
And flowers are hidden 'neath the snow.

Ah! truly sound the warnings so,
While short the days and shorter grow.
Each wand'ring breeze afar conveys
The flying leaves.

Then let the hearth more brightly glow.
Fresh logs upon it gaily throw,
And, while the cheerful fire-light plays,
On some absorbing volume gaze,
And turn, with joy book-lovers know,
The flying leaves.

TO THE PORTRAIT OF AN ANCIENT DAME WITH A BOOK IN HER HAND.

(Rondeau.)

O BOOKISH dame of long ago,
Your eyes a love of learning show,
Your smile a sweetness, calm, serene,
Which blends with dignity of mien
O'er all a wondrous charm to throw!

Speak. Would you wish that you might know
The thousand books, in serried row,
Where we, to-day, our knowledge glean,
O bookish dame?

A feast indeed it is, we trow;
And yet, the hours so swiftly flow,
We read, in haste; not half we 've seen.
Perhaps a pleasure far more keen
Your fewer books, with reading slow,
O bookish dame!

THE KETTLE SINGS.

(Rondeau.)

THE kettle sings right merrily
  Its song of happy liberty,
A song of peace, and love, and home,
Where naught of stress or storm may come,
But only calm felicity.

Again it strikes a bolder key,
A song of social flattery,—
  Of figures gay and polychrome
    The kettle sings.

Of power and mighty majesty,
The strength of ruling destiny,
  A force that could have conquered Rome,
  If once aroused, or quarrelsome,—
All this,—in peaceful loyalty,
    The kettle sings.

WITH HEARTS ADREAM.

THE TIME AND TIDE OF MUSIC.

(Rondeau.)

WITH hearts adream, we feel the spell
Of Music's power Life's tale to tell.
We float upon that mystic tide,
Where naught of evil may abide,
Where Fortune smiles, and all is well.

And happy thoughts that swiftly fell
Like echoes from a distant bell
Swarm round us, as we softly ride,
With hearts adream.

All doubts and dangers they dispel,
And whisper we may yet excel
In all for which we vainly sighed.
Ah! glorious thrill of strength and pride!
We rise on Music's mighty swell,
With hearts adream.

WHEN LOVE WAS YOUNG.

(Rondeau.)

WHEN Love was young and fair to see,
She showed a smiling face to me.
In years that now are past and gone,
The pleasant moments, one by one,
Slipped into far eternity.

And now, alas! the fateful Three
That spin the thread of Time's decree
Have quenched some stars that brightly shone,
When Love was young.

But still my thoughts with pride and glee
Recall the days that used to be.
Time has not left me sad and lone;
For on my heart's true, rightful throne,
Is just the Love I chose when free,
When Love was young.

A SPRING SYMPHONY.

(Rondel.)

GIVE a smile to the year that is coming,
And a smile for the year that is past.
Our spirits are happily humming
A tune that is certain to last;

For the old Doxology thrumming
Sings out in each timely spring blast,—
Give a smile to the year that is coming,
And a smile for the year that is past.

With never a notion benumbing,
Our fears to the breezes we cast,
And list to the strenuous strumming
Of Life's vernal symphony vast.
Give a smile to the year that is coming,
And a smile for the year that is past.

THE GIFTS OF TIME.

(Rondel.)

TIME gives, and takes away,
He takes, and gives again;
And none can bid him stay,
For joy, or hope, or pain.

No moment of a day
Can we, by thought, detain;
Time gives, and takes away,
He takes, and gives again.

Then seize all joy we may,
In sunshine or in rain,—
And, with a spirit gay,
Sing out this glad refrain:
Time gives, and takes away,
He takes, and gives again.

THE GLAD NEW YEAR.

(Roundel.)

THE glad New Year, with ringing chimes
Is ushered in, with royal cheer,
And merry jest, and laughing rhymes,
The glad New Year.

While ringing forth, in accents clear,
Come promises of happy times,
Of friendship, hope, and joy sincere.

But, while the music heavenward climbs,
Let love attune our listening ear.
Beware no sordid thought begrimes
The glad New Year.

A LITTLE CHILD.

(Roundel.)

A LITTLE child, we all are told,
We once in winsome fashion smiled,
And caught life's sunbeams, which enfold
A little child.

Years bring, perhaps, fierce storms and wild.
Our hearts, perforce, grow sad or cold,
And hope is lost, and faith reviled.

What though the world grow stern and old!
Fresh life with hope is still beguiled,
While to our hearts we fondly hold
A little child.

NIGHT AND FALLING SNOW.

(Villanelle.)

IN fleecy clouds of shining white,
The snow envelops all the world,
Throughout the flying winter's night.

So soft it falls, so still and light,
With slightest breath of air enwhirled
In fleecy clouds of shining white.

And covering from mortal sight
All twisted twigs and branches gnarled,
Throughout the flying winter's night.

Like Charity, in force and might,
Yet soft as smoke-wreaths lightly curled
In fleecy clouds of shining white.

All sins washed out,—forgiven quite,—
And underneath the snow enswirled,
Throughout the flying winter's night.

A fresh new world, made clean and right,
Gleams out, with banners all unfurled
In fleecy clouds of shining white,
Throughout the flying winter's night.

O'ER LAND AND SEA.

(Villanelle.)

O'ER land and sea I call to thee,
In whatsoever place thou art,
Oh send a letter back to me!

Though here I stay, and ne'er would flee;
Yet from my very heart of heart
O'er land and sea I call to thee.

E'en though afloat thou mayest be
Thou surely compass hast and chart.
Oh send a letter back to me!

Perhaps beneath some tropic tree,
Or in some busy Eastern mart,—
O'er land and sea I call to thee.

From Egypt, Spain, or Italy,
From any port whence it may start,
Oh send a letter back to me!

The time indeed seems long, since we
Have drifted thus so far apart.
O'er land and sea I call to thee,
Oh send a letter back to me!

MARCH.

(Triolet.)

LIKE a breezy banner blowing
All across the mottled sky,
March her many sides is showing
Like a breezy banner blowing.
Often raining,—often snowing,—
Drifting clouds are sailing high,
Like a breezy banner blowing
All across the mottled sky.

HER MUSIC.

(Sonnet.)

A FAINT, sweet chord of music filled the air,
And on the instant all the world was changed.
My spirit's freer fancy wider ranged,
And showed a vision beautiful and fair,
With smiling eyes, the sunlight in her hair,
Its curling shadows swiftly disarranged
Yet never from that sunny light estranged,—
A vision sweet, and dear beyond compare.

Ah! blessed music, whose reality
Can bring such troops of echoes in its train!
For her fair fingers, masterful in scope,
With gift of life to each melodious key,
Play all the music of my heart's refrain,
The deepest, vibrant chords of love and hope.

SPRING WHISPERS.

(Sonnet.)

BENEATH the snows the earth still sleeps, and dreams
Of ages long, which now have passed away,
Ere man first saw the gladsome light of day,—
Before the very mountains or the streams
Came forth, obedient to the laws and schemes
Of Nature. And beneath this ice-bound clay,
Just as of old, awaiting life, there stay
The summer warmths, the frozen sunshine-gleams.

But soon a breath will stir the dark abode.
A whisper will go round the whole wide earth,
A thought, with mighty motion strong and rife.
While, bursting forth, and shaking off her load,
Behold once more Spring's miracle of birth!
Behold the dead come back again to life!

ALTHOUGH MY LOVE IS FAR AWAY.

(Pantoum.)

ALTHOUGH my Love is far away,
Her image still abides with me.
I feel her presence day by day,
And all her dainty witchery.

Her image still abides with me,
Throughout the morning, noon, and night,
And all her dainty witchery
Comes forth to bless my inmost sight.

Throughout the morning, noon, and night,
The vision of my dearest Love
Comes forth to bless my inmost sight,
Like sunshine from the sky above.

The vision of my dearest Love,
To win my smiles, or dry my tears,
Like sunshine from the sky above
Comes ever down the passing years.

To win my smiles, or dry my tears,
Her sweet voice, ringing like a bell,
Comes ever down the passing years
That hurry fast, their tale to tell.

Her sweet voice, ringing like a bell,
  Arouses echoes in my heart
That hurry fast their tale to tell,
  Of days when we no more shall part,—

Arouses echoes in my heart,
  To sing aloud in joyful strain,
Of days when we no more shall part,—
  And I no longer sigh in vain,—

To sing aloud in joyful strain,
  My Love is coming back once more.
And I no longer sigh in vain,—
  Sweet fancies whisper o'er and o'er:

"My Love is coming back once more."
  Ah! laggard Time, be not too long!
Sweet fancies whisper o'er and o'er,
  As joyfully I sing my song.

Ah! laggard Time, be not loo long!
  I feel her presence day by day,
As joyfully I sing my song,
  Although my Love is far away.

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